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ABSTRACT:

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To increase liking and interesting of a game by capturing a game character information corresponding to a specified information from a storage part based on bar code information read out of a bar code, and using the captured game character information for marching the game.

SOLUTION: A game device body 32 to which a bar code reader 40 is connected is provided with a RAM 34 as a storage part, a LCD unit 35, a key input part 37, a CPU 38 as a control processor, etc. In the RAM 34, a table is stored which records the relation between 'key information' and game character information. The CPU 38 captures game character information corresponding to

'key information' from the stock information in the RAM 34 based on
'key
information' of the bar code information, and some of the captured
game
character information is stored in a buffer. The captured game
character
information is used for marching the game.

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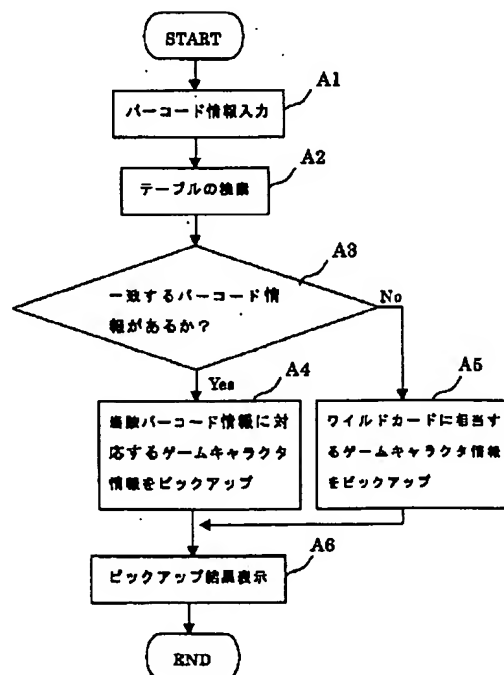
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(54) 【発明の名称】 ゲーム装置

(57) 【要約】 (修正有)

【課題】 バーコードデータを用いたゲーム装置において、より嗜好性、娯楽性を高めることができる要素を付加する。

【解決手段】 ある「キーとなる情報」を基に、当該「キーとなる情報」に対応するゲームキャラクタ情報を前記ストック情報の中から捕獲（ないしはピックアップ）し、当該捕獲されたゲームキャラクタ情報を採用してゲームを進行させるゲーム装置であって、特定の「キーとなる情報」群に共通の要因に基づいて、ピックアップされるゲームキャラクタ情報の差別化を行うゲーム装置。これにより、ゲーム装置に特定の企業の宣伝広告機能を付加することができる。



【特許請求の範囲】

【請求項1】 入力部、記憶部、制御処理部、及び出力部を備え、

前記記憶部は、ゲームプログラムを格納していると共に、相互に識別できるゲームキャラクタ情報の集合をストック情報として備え、

前記制御処理部は、ある「キーとなる情報」を基に、当該「キーとなる情報」に対応するゲームキャラクタ情報を前記ストック情報の中からピックアップし、当該ピックアップされたゲームキャラクタ情報を採用してゲームを進行させるゲーム装置であって、特定の「キーとなる情報」群に共通の要因に基づいて、ピックアップされるゲームキャラクタ情報の差別化を行うことを特徴とするゲーム装置。

【請求項2】 前記特定の「キーとなる情報」群に共通の要因は、ある特定の企業のものであることを特徴とする請求項1記載のゲーム装置。

【請求項3】 前記「キーとなる情報」は、バーコードから読み出されたバーコード情報であることを特徴とする請求項1または2記載のゲーム装置。

【請求項4】 入力部、記憶部、制御処理部、及び出力部を備え、

前記記憶部は、ゲームプログラムを格納していると共に、相互に識別できるゲームキャラクタ情報の集合をストック情報として備え、

前記制御処理部は、ある「キーとなる情報」を基に、当該「キーとなる情報」に対応するゲームキャラクタ情報を前記ストック情報の中からピックアップし、当該ピックアップされたゲームキャラクタ情報の幾つかを捕獲しておくバッファを備え、当該捕獲されたゲームキャラクタ情報を採用してゲームを進行させるゲーム装置であって、特定の「キーとなる情報」群に共通の要因に基づいて、ピックアップされるゲームキャラクタ情報の差別化を行うことを特徴とするゲーム装置。

【請求項5】 前記特定の「キーとなる情報」群に共通の要因は、ある特定の企業のものであることを特徴とする請求項4記載のゲーム装置。

【請求項6】 前記「キーとなる情報」は、バーコードから読み出されたバーコード情報であることを特徴とする請求項4または5記載のゲーム装置。

【請求項7】 請求項1から6いずれか記載のゲーム装置の広告手段としての使用。

【請求項8】 ピックアップされたゲームキャラクタのピックアップ回数を記録する記録手段と、この記録手段に記録されている内容を出力する出力手段と、を備えることを特徴とする請求項1から6いずれか記載のゲーム装置。

【請求項9】 請求項8記載のゲーム装置と、前記記録手段に記録されたデータと顧客企業からの売上げデータ

とを対比してそれらの相関を算出する算出手段と、この算出手段の結果を表示する表示手段と、を備える広告宣伝装置。

【請求項10】 顧客企業からの要請に応じて、当該顧客企業に係るゲームキャラクタの差別化を行うことにより当該顧客企業の広告宣伝手段となる広告宣伝用ゲーム装置。

【発明の詳細な説明】

【0001】

【発明の属する技術分野】本発明は、商品などに付されているバーコードを読み取り、読み取ったデータに従って選択したゲームキャラクタを用いてゲームを行うことのできるゲーム装置に関する。

【0002】

【従来の技術】従来より、家庭用ゲーム装置として、ゲームに必要なデータをバーコード表示したカードを用いてゲームを行うゲーム装置が多数知られている。

【0003】このようなゲーム装置の例を示すと、特公平5-30475号公報には、カードに表示されたバーコードを読み取り、読み取ったバーコードデータに従ってカード同士を対戦させてゲームの勝敗を決定するカードゲーム玩具が記載されている。

【0004】また、特公平7-121293号公報には、カードに表示されたバーコードを読み取り、テレビゲームのための演算をしてバーコードデータにより決まるゲームキャラクタを含む画像出力を出すバーコード式テレビゲームが記載されている。

【0005】さらに、特開平5-307634号公報には、カードのバーコードを読み取り、読み取ったバーコードデータを他の情報に変換し、前記情報に従ってゲーム内容を決定するとともに、ゲーム内容を映像化及び音声化するカードゲーム玩具が記載されている。

【0006】これら以外にも、バーコードを用いるゲーム装置は多数知られているが、バーコードを用いれば、ゲームの操作が迅速、的確に行えるので、ゲームに緊迫感を持たせることができる。これとともに、ゲームキャラクタやゲーム内容の決定及び映像化・音声化をバーコードデータに基づいて行うようにした場合には、プレイヤーの興味を喚起するゲーム内容を簡易に起動させることができ、ゲームの娯楽性が向上する。

【0007】

【発明が解決しようとする課題】このように、従来のゲーム装置においても、ゲームの娯楽性を高めるための種々の工夫がなされているが、需要者の嗜好の変化に合わせてゲームの娯楽性を更に高めていく必要がある。

【0008】本発明は、このような潮流のもとになされたものであり、その目的は、バーコードデータを用いたゲーム装置において、より嗜好性、娯楽性を高めることができる要素を付加することにある。

【0009】

【課題を解決するための手段】以上のような目的を達成するために、本発明に係るゲーム装置においては、あるバーコードから読み出されたバーコード情報（バーコードデータ）を基に、当該バーコード情報に対応するゲームキャラクタ情報を記憶部の中から捕獲（ないしはピックアップ）し、当該捕獲されたゲームキャラクタ情報を採用してゲームを進行させることを特徴としている。

【0010】即ち、従来のゲーム装置においては、バーコード情報は、ゲームのプレイに必要なデータそのものであったのに対し、本発明に係るゲーム装置においては、バーコード情報は、ゲームキャラクタを捕獲するためのツールとなる。言い換えれば、本発明においては、バーコード情報は、あるゲームキャラクタ情報を捕獲してくるためのキーとなる情報（「キーとなる情報」）として位置付けられる。なお、本発明においては、「キーとなる情報」とは、キーボードやタッチパネル等から入力される情報のような「ある認識された対象を一義的に特定するための手段を介して入力される情報」という意味ではなく、「ある集団からある対象を偶発的に選ぶ際のきっかけとなる情報」という意味で用いている。

【0011】また、従来のゲーム装置においては、バーコード情報を用いて演算を行うことによりゲームキャラクタやゲーム内容を決定したりゲーム内容を映像化及び音声化していたのに対し、本発明に係るゲーム装置においては、予め用意されたストックの中からゲームキャラクタ情報をピックアップしてきて、それをゲームに使用する。従って、本発明によれば、この差異に基づいて、バーコード情報を用いた演算を行うことなくゲームキャラクタを決定することができる。

【0012】より具体的には、本発明においては以下の

ようなゲーム装置を提供する。

【0013】（１） 入力部、記憶部、制御処理部、及び出力部を備え、前記記憶部は、ゲームプログラムを格納していると共に、相互に識別できるゲームキャラクタ情報の集合をストック情報として備え、前記制御処理部は、ある「キーとなる情報」を基に、当該「キーとなる情報」に対応するゲームキャラクタ情報を前記ストック情報の中からピックアップし、当該ピックアップされたゲームキャラクタ情報の幾つかを捕獲しておくバッファを備え、当該捕獲されたゲームキャラクタ情報を採用してゲームを進行させることを特徴とするゲーム装置。

【0014】（２） 上記（１）記載のゲーム装置において、前記記憶部は、前記「キーとなる情報」と前記ゲームキャラクタ情報との対応関係を記録したテーブルを備え、当該テーブルに基づいて前記ストック情報の中からのゲームキャラクタ情報のピックアップを行うことを特徴とするゲーム装置。

【0015】（３） ある「キーとなる情報」から得られたイメージ情報もしくは特性情報との間でイメージ上もしくは特性上の相同性を見ることにより、前記「キー

となる情報」に対応したゲームキャラクタ情報の判定を行うことを特徴とする上記（１）記載のゲーム装置。

【0016】（４） 上記（１）記載のゲーム装置において、前記記憶部は、一旦読み出された「キーとなる情報」を直接もしくは他の情報に変換して記憶する読み出し結果記憶部を備え、当該読み出し結果記憶部に記憶された前記直接のもしくは変換された「キーとなる情報」を基に、前記ストック情報の中からのゲームキャラクタ情報のピックアップを行うことを特徴とするゲーム装置。

【0017】（５） 前記出力部はモニターであり、前記ストック情報の中からゲームキャラクタ情報をピックアップした結果を画面上に表示することを特徴とする上記（１）記載のゲーム装置。

【0018】（６） 前記出力部は、前記「キーとなる情報」に対応するゲームキャラクタ情報が前記ストック情報の中に存在する場合には、ピックアップ結果として、ピックアップに成功した旨もしくはピックアップしたゲームキャラクタ情報を表示する一方、読み取りエラー、もしくは前記「キーとなる情報」に対応するゲームキャラクタ情報が前記ストック情報の中に存在しない場合には、ピックアップ結果として、ピックアップに失敗した旨を表示することを特徴とする上記（５）記載のゲーム装置。

【0019】（７） 前記ストック情報の中に、いわゆるワイルドカードに相当するゲームキャラクタ情報を備え、読み取りエラー、もしくは対応するゲームキャラクタ情報が前記ストック情報の中に存在しない場合には、前記ワイルドカードに相当するゲームキャラクタ情報を割り当てることを特徴とする上記（１）記載のゲーム装置。

【0020】「ワイルドカード」というのは、一般には、不特定の文字や単語を指示するための記号や、トランプのジョーカーのようなものを意味するが、本発明で「ワイルドカードに相当するゲームキャラクタ情報」と言うときは、読み取りエラー、もしくは対応するゲームキャラクタ情報が前記ストック情報の中に存在しない場合に割り当てるためのゲームキャラクタ情報のことを示すものとする。

【0021】（８） 前記ストック情報の中に、いわゆるワイルドカードに相当するゲームキャラクタ情報を備え、前記出力部は、読み取りエラー、もしくは対応するゲームキャラクタ情報が前記ストック情報の中に存在しない場合には、ピックアップ結果として、前記ワイルドカードに相当するゲームキャラクタ情報をピックアップした旨もしくは前記ワイルドカードに相当するゲームキャラクタ情報を表示することを特徴とする上記（５）記載のゲーム装置。

【0022】（９） 前記「キーとなる情報」は、バーコードから読み出されたバーコード情報であることを特

徴とする上記(1)から(8)いずれか記載のゲーム装置。

【0023】(10) バーコード読取装置と一体化されていることを特徴とする上記(9)記載のゲーム装置。なお、「一体化されている」というのは、取り外し可能であっても、結合した状態が極めて強固であるために一体化されているものとみなせる場合も含む。

【0024】(11) 前記バーコード読取装置は、平面のバーコードを読み取る照射式のバーコード読取装置であることを特徴とする上記(10)記載のゲーム装置。

【0025】(12) 前記出力部はモニターであり、前記ストック情報の中からピックアップされたゲームキャラクタ情報と共に、当該ゲームキャラクタ情報に対応するバーコードを画面上に同時に表示することを特徴とする上記(10)または(11)いずれか記載のゲーム装置。

【0026】(13) 携帯用ゲーム装置であることを特徴とする上記(1)から(12)いずれか記載のゲーム装置。

【0027】(14) 入力部、記憶部、制御処理部、及び出力部を備え、前記記憶部は、ゲームプログラムを格納していると共に、相互に識別できるゲームキャラクタ情報の集合をストック情報として有し、前記制御処理部は、あるバーコードから読み出されたバーコード情報を基に、当該バーコード情報に対応するゲームキャラクタ情報群を前記ストック情報の中からピックアップし、当該ゲームキャラクタ情報群の中からゲームの進行に必要なゲームキャラクタ情報を採用する機会をゲームプレイヤーに付与することを特徴とするゲーム装置。

【0028】(15) 前記バッファに捕獲されているゲームキャラクタ情報を一覧表示することを特徴とする上記(1)記載のゲーム装置。

【0029】(16) 前記バッファに捕獲されているゲームキャラクタ情報を消去することを特徴とする上記(1)記載のゲーム装置。

【0030】以上のような本発明からは、その一般的な原理として、「バーコードから得られる情報を、ある特定の情報を所定の情報の群の中からピックアップしてくるときの「キーとなる情報」として使用方法」というものが導かれる。ここで、「特定の情報」とは、ピックアップ可能な程度に他と区別できる情報の一つのまとまりを言い、「所定の情報の群」とは、当該「特定の情報」が2つ以上集まったものを言う。

【0031】また、本発明においては以下のようなゲーム装置を提供する。

【0032】(17) 入力部、記憶部、制御処理部、及び出力部を備え、前記記憶部は、ゲームプログラムを格納していると共に、相互に識別できるゲームキャラクタ情報の集合をストック情報として備え、前記制御処理

部は、ある「キーとなる情報」を基に、当該「キーとなる情報」に対応するゲームキャラクタ情報を前記ストック情報の中からピックアップし、当該ピックアップされたゲームキャラクタ情報を採用してゲームを進行させるゲーム装置であって、特定の「キーとなる情報」群に共通の要因に基づいて、ピックアップされるゲームキャラクタ情報の差別化を行うことを特徴とするゲーム装置。

【0033】(18) 前記特定の「キーとなる情報」群に共通の要因は、ある特定の企業のものであることを特徴とする上記(17)記載のゲーム装置。

【0034】(19) 前記「キーとなる情報」は、バーコードから読み出されたバーコード情報であることを特徴とする上記(17)または(18)記載のゲーム装置。

【0035】(20) 入力部、記憶部、制御処理部、及び出力部を備え、前記記憶部は、ゲームプログラムを格納していると共に、相互に識別できるゲームキャラクタ情報の集合をストック情報として備え、前記制御処理部は、ある「キーとなる情報」を基に、当該「キーとなる情報」に対応するゲームキャラクタ情報を前記ストック情報の中からピックアップし、当該ピックアップされたゲームキャラクタ情報の幾つかを捕獲しておくバッファを備え、当該捕獲されたゲームキャラクタ情報を採用してゲームを進行させるゲーム装置であって、特定の「キーとなる情報」群に共通の要因に基づいて、ピックアップされるゲームキャラクタ情報の差別化を行うことを特徴とするゲーム装置。

【0036】(21) 前記特定の「キーとなる情報」群に共通の要因は、ある特定の企業のものであることを特徴とする上記(20)記載のゲーム装置。

【0037】(22) 前記「キーとなる情報」は、バーコードから読み出されたバーコード情報であることを特徴とする上記(20)または(21)記載のゲーム装置。

【0038】以上のような本発明からは、その一般的な原理として、「上記のゲーム装置を、広告手段として使用方法」というものが導かれる。

【0039】(23) ピックアップされたゲームキャラクタのピックアップ回数を記録する記録手段と、この記録手段に記録されている内容を入力する出力手段と、を備えることを特徴とする上記(17)から(22)いずれか記載のゲーム装置。

【0040】(24) 上記(23)記載のゲーム装置と、前記記録手段に記録されたデータと顧客企業からの売上データとを対比してそれらの相関を算出する算出手段と、この算出手段の結果を表示する表示手段と、を備える広告宣伝装置。

【0041】(25) 顧客企業からの要請に応じて、当該顧客企業に係るゲームキャラクタの差別化を行うことにより当該顧客企業の広告宣伝手段となる広告宣伝用

ゲーム装置。

【0042】〔用語の定義等〕

＜ゲーム装置のハード構成＞本発明に係る「ゲーム装置」は、家庭用のものでも、業務用のものでもよいが、特に、場所を選ばず、あるいは手軽に色々なバーコードを読んでそれをゲームに反映させて楽しもうという観点からすれば、内部電源（例えば乾電池）を備えた持ち運び可能な携帯用、家庭用のものが好ましい。特に、携帯用の場合は、場所を選ばずどこでもできるという意味で、本発明を携帯用のゲーム装置に適用する意義は大きい。

【0043】「入力部」は、ボタン、タッチパネル、レバー、キーボードなど、ゲームプレイヤーの意思を伝えるあらゆる媒介物を意味する。

【0044】「記憶部」というのは、いわゆるメモリ、ROM（Read-Only Memory）、RAM（Random Access Memory）、ハードディスク、光磁気ディスクなどをも含む広い概念である。半導体メモリの場合には、不揮発性メモリによりストック情報の蓄積をしていくようにしてもよく、ゲーム装置本体に対する電源とは別にバックアップ電源を備えるようにしてもよい。

【0045】「制御処理部」とは、いわゆるCPUのことである。

【0046】「出力部」は、例えば、モニターや液晶表示画面のような画面表示を行うものを意味するが、この「出力部」には、音声を発したり所定の情報をアナウンスする、いわゆるスピーカも含まれるものとする。

【0047】「バッファ」は、前記ストック情報の中からピックアップされたゲームキャラクタ情報の幾つか（1つのゲームキャラクタ情報でもよい）を捕獲し得るメモリのことを意味する。

【0048】その他、本発明のゲーム装置には、「キーとなる情報」としての商品等に付されたバーコードを読み取る「バーコード読取装置（バーコードリーダ）」が取り付けられている。本発明においては、「バーコード読取装置」として、「平面のバーコードを読み取る照射式のバーコード読取装置」を用いるのが好適である。

【0049】ここで、バーコードを用いた従来からのゲーム装置に採用されているスリット式のバーコード読取装置を採用した場合には、この装置のスリットに通すために、商品等に付されたバーコードを切り取る必要があったが、前記照射式のバーコード読取装置は、直接読み取りができるため、切り取りの手間を省くことができる利点がある。

【0050】このほかにも、直接読み取りができるがゆえに、他のゲーム装置のモニター等に画面表示されたものをそのまま読み取ることもできる。

【0051】なお、同様の作用効果を奏する照射式のバーコード読取装置としては、ペンタイプのものでカートリッジタイプのものがあるが、これらは現時点で存在す

るものを例示したものにすぎず、従って、将来同様の作用効果を奏するバーコード読取装置が出現した場合には、本発明における「バーコード読取装置」と均等なものとして取り扱われるべきである。

【0052】＜バーコード情報について＞本発明において「キーとなる情報」として用いている「バーコード情報」は、例えば商品コード等を白線と黒線の集まりとして表すものであり、日本にはJIS規格であるJAN（Japan Article Number）その他がある。基本的な記号は、モジュールで、一定幅の白地（白バー）、黒字（黒バー）を組み合わせで作られている。例えば、JANの標準版では、13個の数字を用いてバーコード情報を表しており、最初の2個の数字が国名で、続く10個の数字が会社名と商品コードを、最後の1字がチェック文字を表している。そして、商品コードを表す10個の数字のうち、最初の5桁はメーカー識別コード（これはメーカー毎に定められる固有のものである）を表し、次の5桁が商品アイテムコードを表している。

【0053】このような「バーコード情報」からは、当該バーコード情報に関連した「イメージ情報」や「特性情報」を得ることができる。

【0054】ここで、「イメージ情報」、即ち、「あるバーコード情報から得られたイメージ情報」とは、基本的には、あるバーコード情報から得られた商品の外観を意味する。例えば、缶ジュースに付されているバーコードを例に挙げて説明すると、そこには“缶ジュース”ということを識別・特定するための情報（前記JANの標準版の場合は、“缶ジュース”という商品を表す商品アイテムコード）が書き込まれており、この情報を認識することにより“缶ジュース”という商品が識別・特定されるようになっていく。この缶ジュースは、通常、“細長く円筒状であるという外観”を有しており、この“細長く円筒状であるという外観”というのが、缶ジュースのバーコード情報から得られたイメージ情報に相当する。

【0055】一方、「特性情報」、即ち、「あるバーコード情報から得られた特性情報」とは、基本的には、あるバーコード情報から得られた商品が内在している性質（即ち、その商品の属性から商品に本来備えられている特性）を意味する。例えば、栄養ドリンクに付されているバーコードを例に挙げて説明すると、そこには“栄養ドリンク”ということを識別・特定するための情報（前記JANの標準版の場合は、“栄養ドリンク”という商品を表す商品アイテムコード）が書き込まれており、この情報を認識することにより“栄養ドリンク”という商品が識別・特定されるようになっていく。この栄養ドリンクは、通常、“栄養がありパワー回復に効果があるという特性”を有しており、この“栄養がありパワー回復に効果があるという特性”というのが、栄養ドリンクのバーコード情報から得られた特性情報に相当する。

【0056】さらに、「バーコード情報」は各メーカー毎に異なるものであるため、「バーコード情報」を用いれば、ある特定の企業（メーカー）を他から識別することもできる（前記JANの標準版の場合は、メーカー毎に定められるメーカー識別コードにより、ある特定のメーカーを他から識別できる）。

【0057】＜ゲームキャラクタ情報について＞「ゲームキャラクタ情報」とは、「ゲームに登場するもの」という広い意味のものであり、具体的であると抽象的であるとを問わない。そして、そこにはゲームキャラクタそのものの情報やゲームキャラクタの属性情報（強い、大きい、恐い等、ゲームキャラクタの特性を示す情報）のほか、背景の情報も含まれる。「ゲームキャラクタ」としては、例えば、人や動植物等の生物、車や爆弾等の非生物、更に、これらの変形体（怪獣、幽霊等）が考えられる。

【0058】また、「相互に識別できる」とは、区別できる、それぞれ別のものとして特定できる、もしくは、それぞれ個別のものとして把握できる、という意味である。例えば、外形が互いに異なり、相互に区別が可能なゲームキャラクタ同士、もしくは、強さが異なり、それぞれ別個のものとして把握できるゲームキャラクタ同士は、「相互に識別できる」ものである。

【0059】＜バーコード情報とゲームキャラクタ情報との関係について＞上述した「バーコード情報」と「ゲームキャラクタ情報」との対応関係は、前記記憶部に設けられたテーブルに記録されている。

【0060】ここで、「テーブル」は、バーコード情報とゲームキャラクタ情報との間の何らかの関係を、「予め」規定しているものを意味する。従って、予め規定されている関係であれば、正、逆、無秩序の如何を問わないが、好ましい対応関係としては、「あるバーコード情報から得られたイメージ情報もしくは特性情報との間での、イメージ上もしくは特性上の相同性」が規定されているものが挙げられる。この場合には、「テーブル」は、あるバーコード情報から得られたイメージ情報もしくは特性情報と、イメージ上もしくは特性上の共通点が多いゲームキャラクタ（もしくはゲームアイテム）とを対応付けて記録しておくものとなる。

【0061】＜バーコード情報に対応したゲームキャラクタ情報の判定について＞「バーコード情報に対応したゲームキャラクタ情報の判定」は、前記「あるバーコード情報から得られたイメージ情報」もしくは「あるバーコード情報から得られた特性情報」との間で、「イメージ上の相同性」もしくは「特性上の相同性」を見ることにより行われる。

【0062】ここで、「イメージ上の相同性」とは、イメージ上（外観上）の共通点が多いことをいい、イメージ上の共通点が多いゲームキャラクタ（もしくはゲームアイテム）として、例えば前記缶ジュースの場合には、

缶ジュースに似ているゲームキャラクタ、缶ジュースを擬人化したゲームキャラクタ、ゲームアイテムとしての缶ジュース等が想定される。

【0063】また、「特性上の相同性」とは、特性上（内在している性質上）の共通点が多いことをいい、特性上の共通点が多いゲームキャラクタ（もしくはゲームアイテム）としては、例えば前記栄養ドリンクの場合には、栄養ドリンクと似た役割を果たすゲームキャラクタ（ゲームキャラクタ自身のパワーが本来に強い場合と、後天的にゲームキャラクタのパワーが強くなる場合の両方を含む）や、活動エネルギーを新たに付与するゲームアイテムとしての使用等が考えられる。

【0064】＜ゲームキャラクタ情報のピックアップについて＞「ゲームキャラクタ情報のピックアップ」は、「あるバーコードから読み出されたバーコード情報を「基に」行われる。従って、当該バーコード情報に対応するゲームキャラクタ情報をピックアップするだけでなく、当該バーコード情報と似たバーコード情報に対応するゲームキャラクタ情報をピックアップすることも本発明に含まれるものとする。

【0065】＜ピックアップされるゲームキャラクタ情報の差別化について＞「ピックアップされるゲームキャラクタ情報の差別化」は、「特定のバーコード情報群に「共通の要因」に基づいて行われる。

【0066】ここで、「共通の要因」とは、ある特定の企業（例えばメーカー）であることを識別できる何らかの要因のことをいう。

【0067】即ち、前述したように、「バーコード情報」はある特定の企業を識別するための要因（前記JANの標準版の場合はメーカー識別コード）を含んでおり、このような他の企業から識別できる要因となるものを「共通の要因」という。従って、このようにメーカー名、商標名がバーコードにそのまま情報として入っていた場合は勿論のこと、バーコードにより各企業を識別できるものであれば、この「共通の要因」という概念に含まれる。

【0068】ゲームキャラクタ情報の「差別化を行う」とは、例えば、ある特定の企業のバーコードを、他の企業のバーコードよりも何らかの形で有利に取り扱うことをいい、例えば、ベンチという商品につき、「特定の企業のベンチに付されたバーコードを読み込んだ場合には、他の企業のベンチに付されているバーコードを読み込んだ場合よりも強いゲームキャラクタを捕獲できる」というような差別化を行うことが考えられる。これは当該特定の企業に係る商品等を宣伝広告することにつながるもので、このようにすれば、本発明のゲーム装置に特定の企業の宣伝広告機能を付加することができる。また、このようにした場合には、長期的に見れば、ゲームプレイヤーは、強いゲームキャラクタを得るために、当該差別化された特定の企業のバーコードを集めるように誘引

されてその商品を購入していく結果となるのであるから、その顧客吸引効果は大きい。

【0069】

【発明を実施するための形態】以下、本発明に係るゲーム装置に好適な実施形態について、図を参照しながら説明する。

【0070】〔装置構成〕図1は本発明のゲーム装置のハードウェア構成を示すブロック図である。この図1に示すゲーム装置は、家庭や外出先などにおいて個人的に用いられる携帯用のものであり、ゲームプログラム33a

を記憶したカセット31、ゲーム装置本体32、バーコードリーダ（バーコード読取装置）40から構成される。

【0071】バーコードリーダ40は、平面のバーコードを読み取る照射式のバーコード読取装置であり、このバーコードリーダ40としては、取り外し可能なものを用いることができる。しかし、バーコードを読み取る際には、ゲーム装置本体32と一体化されている必要がある。

【0072】また、カセット31は、前記ゲームプログラム33aのほか、複数の画像データ33b、複数の音声データ33c、ストックデータ（ストック情報）33d、テーブル33eを記憶するROM（請求項で言う「記憶部」に相当する）33を備えている。

【0073】ここで、ゲームプログラム33aとしては、例えば対戦型のゲームを実行するためのプログラムを用いることができるが、本発明においては、ゲームキャラクターが登場する全てのタイプのゲームを実行するためのプログラムを用いることができる。

【0074】ストックデータ33dは、相互に識別できるゲームキャラクター情報の集合であるが、このストック情報の中には、ワイルドカードに相当するゲームキャラクター情報も含まれている。

【0075】テーブル33eは、バーコード情報とゲームキャラクター情報との対応関係を記録したものである。即ち、このように、予めテーブル33eにバーコード情報とゲームキャラクター情報との関係を規定しておき（具体的には、予めバーコード情報とゲームキャラクター情報との関係を対応付けておき）、当該関係に従ってあるバーコードから読み出されたバーコード情報に対応するゲームキャラクター情報をピックアップするという態様が、本発明を実現するための好ましい態様である。

【0076】さらに、ゲーム装置本体32は、ゲームプログラム33aを進行させるためのRAM34（このRAM34も請求項で言う「記憶部」に相当する）、ROM33の画像データ33bを画像として表示させる液晶表示ユニット35、及び、音声データ33cを音声として再生させる音声再生ユニット36（これらは請求項で言う「出力部」に相当する）、ゲームプレイヤーの意思を自身が入力するためのキー入力部（請求項で言う「入力部」に相当する）37、並びに、ゲームプログラム33aの処理等を行うCPU（請求項で言う「制御処理部」に相当する）38と、を備

えている。なお、CPU38は、より具体的には、ゲームプログラム33aの進行を命令し、このゲームプログラム33aの進行及びゲームプレイヤーのキー入力に応じて、複数の画像データ33bのうちの適当ものを液晶表示ユニット35へ転送するとともに、複数の音声データ33cのうちの適当なものを音声再生ユニット36へ転送するものである。

【0077】RAM34は、カセット31のROM33の内容（ゲームプログラム33a、画像データ33b、音声データ33c）を記憶するものであるが、前記ストック情報の中からピックアップされたゲームキャラクター情報の幾つか（1つのゲームキャラクター情報でもよい）を捕獲する機能（請求項で言う「バッファ」としての機能）を有している。

【0078】その他、RAM34は、バーコードリーダ40により一旦読み出されたバーコード情報を、直接もしくは他の情報（例えば後述するGコード）に変換して記憶する機能（請求項で言う「読み出し結果記憶部」としての機能）も有している。

【0079】また、CPU38は、あるバーコードから読み出されたバーコード情報を基に、当該バーコード情報に対応するゲームキャラクター情報を前記ストックデータ33dの中からピックアップし、当該ゲームキャラクター情報を採用してゲームを進行させる機能も有している。なお、CPU38は、この機能を前記ゲームプログラム33aを実行することにより実現している。

【0080】〔動作説明〕次に本発明のゲーム装置の動作について説明する。図2、図3は、本発明のゲーム装置の動作の流れを示すフローチャートである。

【0081】＜ゲームキャラクター情報のピックアップ動作の第1の例＞ゲームキャラクター情報のピックアップ動作に関する第1の例について、図2を用いて説明する。

【0082】ゲームプレイヤーは、新しいゲームキャラクターを捕獲したい場合には、所望のバーコードが付された商品を用意し、バーコードリーダ40を当該バーコードに直接当てて当該バーコードを読み取る。すると、読み取られたバーコード情報は、ゲーム装置本体32に送出される。

【0083】ゲーム装置本体32においては、バーコード情報が入力されると（ステップA1）、CPU38により、カセット31のROM33のテーブル33eの検索が行われ（ステップA2）、テーブル33eに一致するバーコード情報があるか（テーブル33eに当該バーコード情報がエントリされているか）が判定される（ステップA3）。

【0084】一致するバーコード情報が存在する場合には、CPU38は、ストックデータ33dの中から、当該バーコード情報に対応するゲームキャラクター情報をピックアップする（ステップA3のYesルートからステップA4）。例えば、缶ジュースに付されているバーコード

を読み取った場合には、テーブル33eにおいて当該バーコード情報と対応付けられているゲームキャラクタ情報（例えば、缶ジュースに似ているゲームキャラクタや、缶ジュースを擬人化したゲームキャラクタ等）をピックアップする。また、栄養ドリンクに付されているバーコードを読み取った場合には、テーブル33eにおいて当該バーコード情報と対応付けられているゲームキャラクタ情報（例えば、栄養ドリンクと似た役割を果たすゲームキャラクタ等）をピックアップする。

【0085】本発明においては、「ゲームキャラクタ情報をピックアップする」という場合には、このようにゲームキャラクタ自体のストックの中からゲームキャラクタをピックアップしてくる場合の他、ゲームキャラクタの性質（強い、大きい、恐い等）をストックとしてプールしているものの中からその一つ又はそれ以上の性質をピックアップしてきて、当該ピックアップされてきた性質をゲームキャラクタに付与する場合も含まれる。即ち、本発明には、ストックの中からピックアップされてきた情報を用いてゲームキャラクタの性質を決定する場合も含まれる。

【0086】一方、一致するバーコード情報が存在しない場合（読み取りエラーの場合も含む）には、CPU38は、ストックデータ33dの中からワイルドカードに相当するゲームキャラクタ情報をピックアップする（ステップA3のNルートからステップA5）。ここで、この「一致するバーコード情報が存在しない場合」には、元々テーブル33eにそのバーコード情報と一致するものがない場合や、前記所望のバーコードの読み取りエラー（誤認識）が起こったためテーブル33eに誤認識されたバーコード情報と一致するものがない場合や、前記所望のバーコードの読み取りエラー（認識不能）が起こったためバーコード情報を認識できずテーブル33eの検索自体ができなかった場合がある。このような場合には、ワイルドカードに相当するゲームキャラクタ情報をピックアップするようにテーブル33eに規定されているので、テーブル33eに基づいてワイルドカードに相当するゲームキャラクタ情報をピックアップする。

【0087】その後、液晶表示ユニット35は、ゲームキャラクタ情報をピックアップした結果を画面上に表示する（ステップA6）。一致するバーコード情報が存在した場合には、ピックアップ結果として、ゲームキャラクタ情報をピックアップした旨もしくはそのピックアップしたゲームキャラクタ情報を表示する。一方、一致するバーコード情報が存在しなかった場合には、ピックアップ結果として、前記ワイルドカードに相当するゲームキャラクタ情報をピックアップした旨もしくは前記ワイルドカードに相当するゲームキャラクタ情報を表示する。

【0088】なお、再度ゲームキャラクタ情報のピックアップを行う場合には、CPU38は、RAM34に記憶されたバーコード情報（バーコード情報そのもの、もしくは

は、変換されたバーコード情報）を基に、前記ストックデータ33dの中からのゲームキャラクタ情報のピックアップを行う。

【0089】＜ゲームキャラクタ情報のピックアップ動作の第2の例＞ゲームキャラクタ情報のピックアップ動作に関する第2の例について、図3を用いて説明する。この第2の例においては、テーブル33eを用いない場合のピックアップ動作について説明するが、基本的な動作は、上述の第1の例の場合と同様である。

10 【0090】ゲーム装置本体32においては、上述の第1の例の場合と同様にして読み取られたバーコード情報が入力されると（ステップB1）、CPU38により、ストックデータ33dの中に対応するバーコード情報があるかが判定される（ステップB2）。ここで、対応するバーコード情報があるかの判定は、あるバーコード情報から得られたイメージ情報もしくは特性情報との間でイメージ上もしくは特性上の相同性を見ることにより行われる。

20 【0091】そして、対応するバーコード情報が存在する場合には、CPU38は、ストックデータ33dの中から、当該バーコード情報に対応するゲームキャラクタ情報をピックアップする（ステップB2のYesルートからステップB3）。

【0092】一方、対応するバーコード情報が存在しない場合（読み取りエラーの場合も含む）には、CPU38は、前記ワイルドカードに相当するゲームキャラクタ情報を割り当て、ストックデータ33dの中からワイルドカードに相当するゲームキャラクタ情報をピックアップする（ステップB2のNルートからステップB4）。

30 【0093】その後、液晶表示ユニット35は、ゲームキャラクタ情報をピックアップした結果を画面上に表示する（ステップB5）。

【0094】なお、この第2の例においても、再度ゲームキャラクタ情報のピックアップを行う場合には、CPU38は、RAM34に記憶されたバーコード情報（バーコード情報そのもの、もしくは、変換されたバーコード情報）を基に、前記ストックデータ33dの中からのゲームキャラクタ情報のピックアップを行う。

40 【0095】＜ゲームキャラクタ情報のピックアップ動作の第3の例＞上述の第1、第2の例においては、CPU38は、バーコード情報を基に一つのゲームキャラクタ情報をピックアップしていたが、当該バーコード情報に対応した複数のゲームキャラクタ情報（ゲームキャラクタ情報群）をピックアップしてRAM34に捕獲するようにしてもよい。

50 【0096】即ち、上述の第1、第2の例においては、バーコード情報とゲームキャラクタ情報とを一对一で対応付けているが、この第3の例においては、一つのバーコード情報に複数のゲームキャラクタ情報を対応付けているのである。

【0097】このようにすれば、ゲームプレイヤーは複数のゲームキャラクタの中から好きなものを選ぶことができるので、ゲームの嗜好性をより高めることができる。

【0098】この場合に、捕獲したゲームキャラクタ情報を一覧表示したり、不要となったゲームキャラクタ情報を消去したりするようにしてもよい。

【0099】なお、この第3の例においても、基本的な動作それ自体は、上述の第1、第2の例の場合と同様である。

【0100】＜他のゲーム装置との間のデータ交換動作＞本発明のゲーム装置は、液晶表示ユニット35により、ピックアップされたゲームキャラクタ情報と共に、当該ゲームキャラクタ情報に対応するバーコード自体を画面上に同時に表示することもできる。

【0101】このようにバーコードそれ自体も画面に表示することとしたのは、他のゲーム装置を使用しているゲームプレイヤーが、この画面表示されたバーコードをそのままバーコードリーダで読み取れるようにするためであり、これによりバーコードの切り取りの手間をかけることなく他のゲーム装置との間でデータ交換を行うことができるようになる。

【0102】＜上記ゲーム装置の広告手段としての使用＞本発明のゲーム装置においては、特定の企業のバーコード情報が集合してなる特定のバーコード情報群に共通する何らかの要因（具体的には、ある特定の企業であることを識別できる何らかの要因）に基づいて、ピックアップされるゲームキャラクタ情報の差別化を行うようにしてもよい。このようにすれば上記ゲーム装置を広告手段として使用することができる。

【0103】この場合の動作を図11に示すフローチャートを用いて説明する。

【0104】まず、営業活動をして、「上記ゲーム装置を広告手段として使用する」というサービス（以下、サービスと言う）の提供を受ける企業を探す（ステップC1）。

【0105】企業からのサービス申し込みを受けると（ステップC2）、その企業の商品等に付されたバーコードには強いキャラクタを割り当てるように設定して、この設定内容を本発明のゲーム装置に組み込む（ステップC3）。

【0106】このような本発明のゲーム装置を販売して、そのゲーム装置が多くのゲームプレイヤーに使用される。このとき、強いキャラクタが割り当てられた前記企業のバーコードが必然的に選ばれていくため、「A企業（その企業名）の商品のバーコードは良い」という評判がたつこととなり、これによりその企業は広告効果を享受することができる（ステップC4）。

【0107】そして、広告効果がゲーム装置製造メーカー及び前記企業にフィードバックされる（ステップC

5）。例えば、ゲーム装置製造メーカーに対しては、前記ステップC3で行ったキャラクタの設定の良否を判断するために、「ゲーム装置の売上」や、消費者モニターを利用して求めた「そのキャラクタの使用頻度」がフィードバックされる。また、前記企業に対しては、前記ステップC4で得られた広告効果を報告するために「サービス申し込み前と比較した商品の売上の差」がフィードバックされる。

【0108】その後は、前記ステップC1からの処理が適宜繰り返される。

【0109】なお、本発明において、「ピックアップされたゲームキャラクタのピックアップ回数を記録する記録手段」はRAM34（図1参照）に相当し、「この記録手段に記録されている内容を出力する出力手段」は液晶表示ユニット35（図1参照）に相当し、「前記記録手段に記録されたデータと顧客企業からの売上げデータとを対比してそれらの相関を算出する算出手段」はCPU38（図1参照）に相当し、「この算出手段の結果を表示する表示手段」は液晶表示ユニット35（図1参照）に相当する。

【0110】＜その他＞本発明のゲーム装置においては、ピックアップ結果を表示するときには、ピックアップに成功した旨を表示したり、テーブル33eにワイルドカードに相当するゲームキャラクタ情報がない場合にはピックアップに失敗した旨を表示するようにしてもよい。

【0111】また、本発明のゲーム装置においては、所定時間内にバーコードが読み込まれた場合に限り、ゲームキャラクタの捕獲を行えるようにしてもよい。例えば、スナック菓子のバーコードについて言えば、おやつを食べる時間帯である3時から4時の間に当該バーコードを読み込んだ場合に限り、対応するゲームキャラクタを捕獲できるようにしてもよい。

【0112】なお、本明細書においては、「キーとなる情報」として「バーコード」を読み取ってゲームキャラクタを捕獲する場合について説明したが、本発明は、例えばバーコードの下方部に記載された数字であるジムスターコード（Gコード）を読み取ってゲームキャラクタを捕獲する場合に適用してもよい。

【0113】また、本発明は「キーとなる情報」として音声（人の声や音楽等）を認識してゲームキャラクタを捕獲する場合に適用してもよい。

【0114】

【実施例】〔第1実施例〕本発明は、図4に示すような携帯用のゲーム装置に適用することができる。ここで、図4は本発明の第1実施例に係るゲーム装置を示すものであり、この図4に示すゲーム装置は、ゲーム装置本体41及び照射式のバーコードリーダ42から構成している。なお、ゲーム装置本体41には、図1に示すカセット31と同様の機能を有するゲームカセットが挿入されるように

している。

【0115】バーコードリーダ42は、バーコード情報を簡単に読み取ることができるものであり、ゲーム装置において周辺機器として利用される。このバーコードリーダ42は、ゲーム装置本体41の通信端子（図示せず）と接続されるようにしており、任意のバーコードを読み取ることにより得たバーコード情報を、通信端子を介してゲーム装置本体41に転送する機能を備えさせている。

【0116】なお、この図4において、符号43は「入力部」として機能する操作ボタン、符号44は「出力部」として機能する液晶表示画面、符号45はやはり「出力部」として機能するスピーカ部を示す。

【0117】本ゲーム装置の具体的な運用について説明すると、ゲームキャラクタを捕獲する際には、ゲーム装置本体41にゲームカセットを差し込むと共に、バーコー*

*ドリーダ42を通信端子に接続する。そして、このような状態でゲームを起動する。

【0118】ゲームの実行中に、バーコードリーダ42により所望のバーコードを読み取ると、ゲーム装置本体41では、読み込まれたデータをバーコード情報として認識する。例えば、烏龍茶の缶に付されているバーコードを読み込んだ場合には、それを烏龍茶のデータだと認識して、メーカーや値段などの情報まで解析する。

【0119】そして、ゲーム装置においては、このバーコード情報を用いて、前述したようなゲームキャラクタのピックアップ動作が行われる。なお、図6～図8にゲームキャラクタの例を示し、以下にピックアップの際に用いるテーブルの例を示す。

【0120】

【表1】

バーコードから読み取られた商品	対応するゲームキャラクタ
りんご	りんご
球	りんご
缶ジュース	ジュース
ナイフ	刃物商人
不明	ちょうちんあんこう

(イメージ)

りんごの外観

球の外観

缶ジュースの外観

ナイフの外観、鋭い

(ワイルドカード)

バーコードから読み取られた商品	対応するゲームキャラクタ
氷	悪の大魔王
酢	マッドサイエンティスト
接着剤	粘り強い性格
栄養ドリンク	ライフ回復剤

(特性)

冷たい、固い

薬品、化学

粘り強い、接着させる

栄養がある、パワー回復

【0121】また、本ゲーム装置は、ゲームキャラクタの能力データ等をバーコード情報化して、液晶表示画面44に表示することもできる。表示したバーコード情報は、他のゲーム装置のバーコードリーダで読み取ることができる。逆に、本ゲーム装置のバーコードリーダ42も、他のゲーム装置本体の液晶表示画面に表示されたバーコード情報を読み取ることができる。従って、通信対戦やデータの交換等を全く新しい形で行うことができる。

【0122】なお、バーコードリーダ42の代わりに、図5(a)、図5(b)に示すようなバーコードリーダを用いることもでき、これらのバーコードリーダを用いても、バーコード情報を簡単に読み取ることができる

※【0123】図5(a)に示すバーコードリーダ46は、照射式のペンタイプバーコードリーダであり、バーコード読取部（スキャナ）46c、通信端子接続部（コード）46a、電源部（バッテリー）46bを備えて構成されている。ここで、電源部46bは、独自の電源（単3ないしは単4の乾電池）である。さらに、図示はしないが、バーコードリーダ46は、電源のON/OFFを可能とすべく電源スイッチを有している。

【0124】また、図5(b)に示すバーコードリーダ47は、照射式のカートリッジタイプのバーコードリーダであり、バーコード読取部47a、電源部/接続部47bを備えて構成されている。

※50 【0125】これらバーコードリーダ46、47も、バーコ

ード情報を読み取ってゲーム装置本体41に転送することができる。

【0126】また、本ゲーム装置は、バーコードリーダーによりバーコードを読み取らなくても、バーコードの数字データを手入力したり、バーコードの数字データを他のゲーム装置から転送すれば、入力された情報をバーコード情報として認識することもできる。従って、このようにして得たバーコード情報を用いても、新たにゲームキャラクタを捕獲することができる。

【0127】〔第2実施例〕また、本発明は、図9に示すような携帯用のゲーム装置に適用することもできる。

【0128】ここで、図9は本発明の第2実施例に係るゲーム装置を示すものであり、このゲーム装置も、ゲーム装置本体21、ゲームカセット22、取り外し可能な照射式のバーコードリーダー（図9では図示せず）から構成している。

【0129】なお、この図9において、符号23、24は「入力部」として機能する操作ボタン、符号25は「出力部」として機能する液晶表示画面、符号26はやはり「出力部」として機能するスピーカ部、符号27はバーコードリーダーの接続端子を示す。

【0130】このようなゲーム装置においても、第1実施例のものと同様にゲームキャラクタの捕獲を行うことができる。

【0131】〔第3実施例〕また、本発明は、図10に示すような家庭用のゲーム装置に適用することもできる。

【0132】ここで、図10は本発明の第3実施例に係るゲーム装置を示すものであり、このゲーム装置は、上述した第1、第2実施例と同様の携帯用ゲーム装置11、このゲーム装置11が挿入されるゲーム装置10により構成している。なお、図10において、符号10aはゲーム装置11の挿入スロットであり、符号12は「入力部」として機能する操作ボタン、符号13は「出力部」として機能する液晶表示画面である。

【0133】即ち、この家庭用のゲーム装置においては、ゲーム装置10が親機として、携帯用ゲーム装置11が子機としてそれぞれ機能しており、携帯用ゲーム装置11をゲーム装置10に挿入して接続することにより、ゲーム装置10が、携帯用ゲーム装置11にて捕獲したゲームキャラクタを用いてゲームを行えるようになっている。

【0134】この家庭用のゲーム装置によれば、新しく捕獲したゲームキャラクタを用いたゲームを行うときに、外出先では携帯用ゲーム装置11で、家庭ではゲーム装置10で行うという使い方をすることもできる。

【0135】

【発明の効果】本発明のゲーム装置によれば、入力されたバーコード情報と対応するゲームキャラクタ情報を記憶部の中から捕獲（ないしはピックアップ）しているので、演算等の複雑な処理を行うことなくゲームキャラ

クタを捕獲できる。従って、ゲーム装置を簡易なものとしながら、ゲームの嗜好性、娯楽性を高めることができる。

【0136】また、本発明によれば、平面のバーコードを読み取る照射式のバーコード読取装置を採用しているので、商品等に付されたバーコードを直接読み取ることができる。従って、従来のゲーム装置で必要であったバーコードの切り取りの手間を省くことができるほか、他のゲーム装置のモニター等に画面表示されたものをそのまま読み取することもできる。

【0137】さらに、本発明によれば、一つのバーコード情報が入力されたときに、対応する複数のゲームキャラクタ情報（ゲームキャラクタ情報群）をピックアップすることもできるので、このようにすればゲームプレイヤーに所望のゲームキャラクタを選ぶ機会を与えることができ、ゲームの嗜好性をより高めることができる。

【0138】またさらに、本発明によれば、ゲームキャラクタ情報の差別化を行うこともできるので、このようにすれば本発明のゲーム装置に特定の企業の宣伝広告機能を付加することができる。

【図面の簡単な説明】

【図1】本発明のゲーム装置のハードウェア構成を示すブロック図である。

【図2】本発明のゲーム装置の動作の流れを示すフローチャートである。

【図3】本発明のゲーム装置の動作の流れを示すフローチャートである。

【図4】本発明の第1実施例に係るゲーム装置を示す図である。

【図5】(a)、(b)はともに、本発明の第1実施例に係るゲーム装置で用いることができるバーコードリーダーを示す図である。

【図6】ゲームキャラクタの例を示す図である。

【図7】ゲームキャラクタの例を示す図である。

【図8】ゲームキャラクタの例を示す図である。

【図9】本発明の第2実施例に係るゲーム装置を示す図である。

【図10】本発明の第3実施例に係るゲーム装置を示す図である。

【図11】本発明のゲーム装置の動作の流れを示すフローチャートである。

【符号の説明】

31 カセット

32 ゲーム装置本体

33 ROM（記憶部）

33a ゲームプログラム

33b 画像データ

33c 音声データ

33d ストックデータ（ストック情報）

33e テーブル

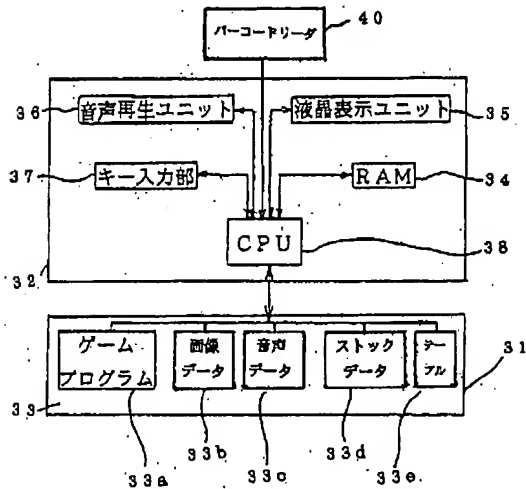
21

- 34 RAM (記憶部)
- 35 液晶表示ユニット (出力部)
- 36 音声再生ユニット
- 37 キー入力部 (入力部)
- 38 CPU (制御処理部)
- 40 バーコードリーダー (バーコード読取装置)
- 41 ゲーム装置本体
- 42 バーコードリーダー
- 43 操作ボタン
- 44 液晶表示画面
- 45 スピーカ部
- 46、47 バーコードリーダー

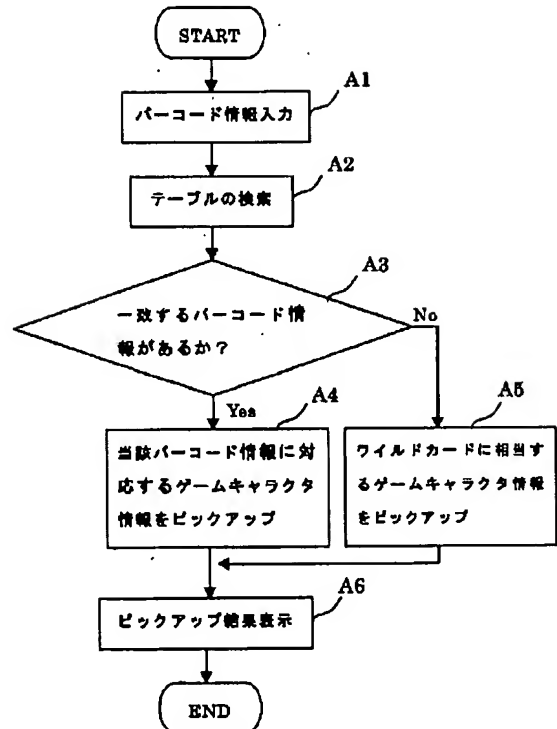
22

- 21 ゲーム装置本体
- 22 ゲームカセット
- 23、24 操作ボタン
- 25 液晶表示画面
- 26 スピーカ部
- 27 接続端子
- 10 ゲーム装置
- 11 ゲーム装置
- 10a 挿入スロット
- 12 操作ボタン
- 13 液晶表示画面

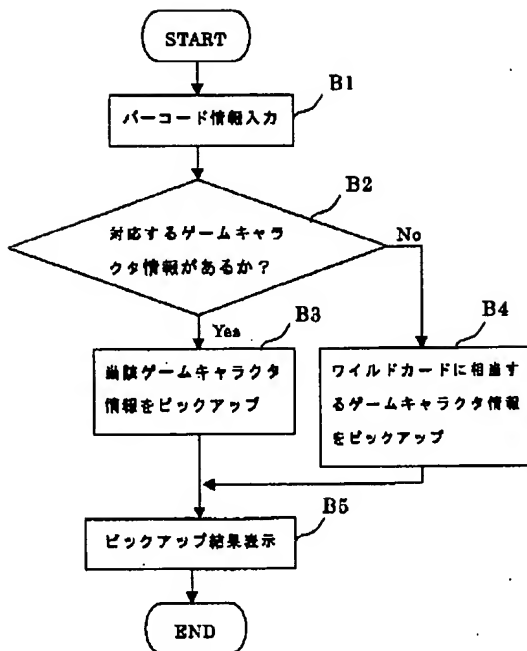
【図1】



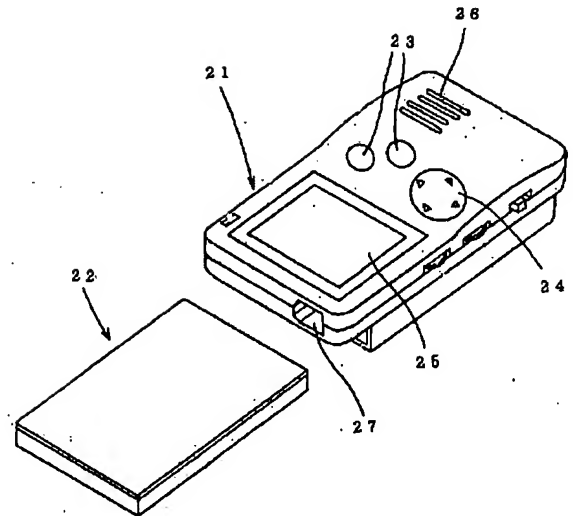
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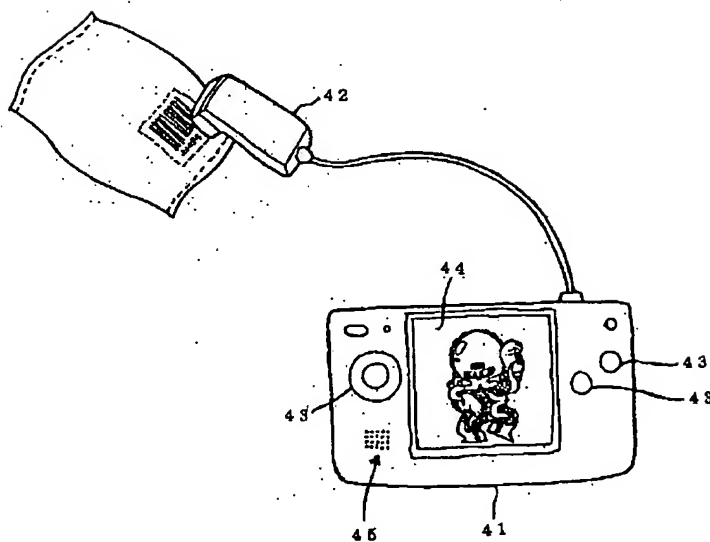
【図3】



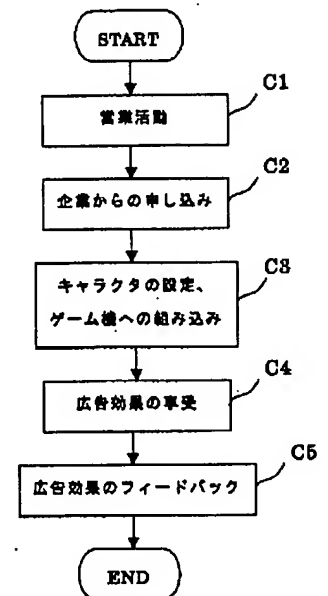
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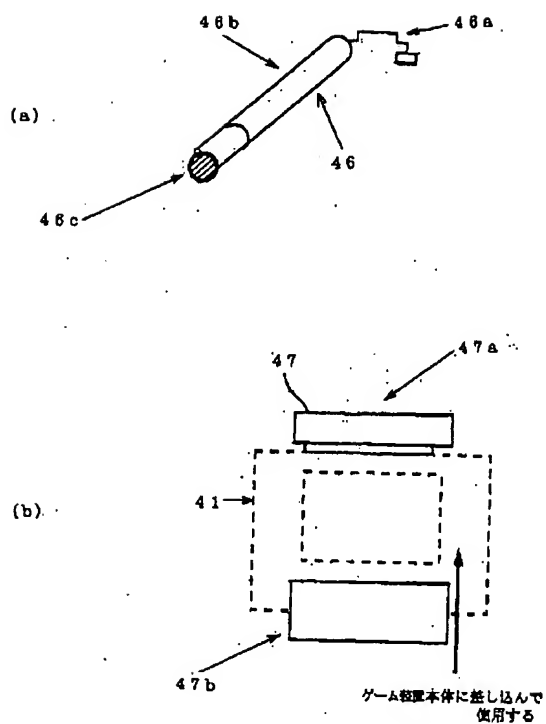
【図4】



【図11】



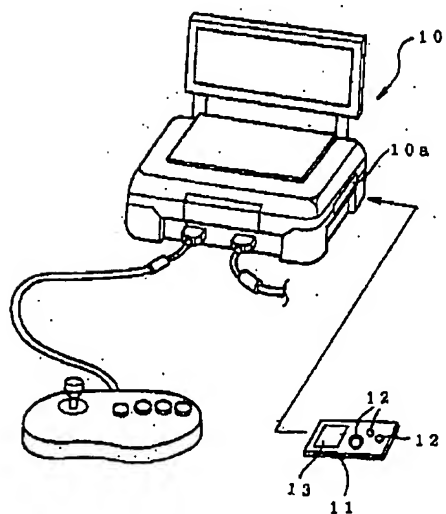
【図5】



【図6】



【図10】



【図7】



【図8】



* NOTICES *

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1. This document has been translated by computer. So the translation may not reflect the original precisely.

2. **** shows the word which can not be translated.

3. In the drawings, any words are not translated.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[Detailed Description of the Invention]

[0001]

[Field of the Invention] This invention relates to the game equipment which can perform a game using the game character which read the bar code given to goods etc. and chose it according to the read data.

[0002]

[Description of the Prior Art] Much game equipments which perform a game from before using the card which indicated the data required for a game by the bar code as home video game equipment are known.

[0003] If the example of such game equipment is shown, the bar code displayed on the card is read to JP,5-30475,B, and the card game toy which cards are opposed according to the read bar code data, and determines the victory or defeat of a game is indicated.

[0004] Moreover, the bar code type TV game which takes out the image output containing the game character reads the bar code displayed on the card to JP,7-121293,B, calculates to it for a TV game, and it is decided with bar code data that will be it is indicated.

[0005] Furthermore, the bar code of a card is read, and while changing the read bar code data into other information and determining the contents of a game according to said information, conversion to signals and the voice-ized card game toy are indicated by JP,5-307634,A in the contents of a game.

[0006] Although much game equipments which use a bar code besides these are known, if a bar code is used, since it can carry out quickly [actuation of a game], and exactly, an oppressive feeling can be given to a game. When the decision of a game character or the contents of a game, and conversion to signals and voice-izing are made to be performed with this based on bar code data, the contents of a game which evoke the interest of a player can be started simply, and the enjoyableness of a game improves.

[0007]

[Problem(s) to be Solved by the Invention] Thus, also in conventional game equipment, although the various devices for raising the enjoyableness of a game are made, it is necessary to raise the enjoyableness of a game further to compensate for change of a need person's taste.

[0008] This invention is made by the basis of such a tidal current, and the purpose is in adding the element which can raise palatability and enjoyableness more in the game equipment which used bar code data.

[0009]

[Means for Solving the Problem] In order to attain the above purposes, in the game equipment concerning this invention, it is characterized by capturing game character information corresponding to the bar code information concerned out of the storage section based on the bar code information (bar code data) read from a certain bar code (or pickup), adopting the captured game character information concerned as it, and advancing a game.

[0010] That is, in conventional game equipment, bar code information serves as a tool for capturing a game character in the game equipment concerning this invention to bar code information having been the data required for the play of a game itself. In other words, in this invention, bar code information is positioned as information ("information used as a key") used as the key for capturing a certain game character information. In addition, in this invention, it uses not in the semantics of "information "whose information used as a key" is and which is inputted through the means for specifying a certain recognized object uniquely" but in the semantics of "the information used as the cause at the time of choosing a certain object from a certain ensemble accidentally". [like the information inputted from a keyboard, a touch panel, etc.]

✕[0011] Moreover, in conventional game equipment, by calculating using bar code information, a game character and the contents of a game are determined, or game character information is taken up out of the

stock prepared beforehand in the game equipment applied to this invention to conversion to signals and having voice-ized in the contents of a game, and it is used for a game. Therefore, according to this invention, a game character can be determined based on this difference, without performing the operation using bar code information.

[0012] More specifically in this invention, the following game equipments are offered.

[0013] It has the input section, the storage section, the control processing section, and the output section.

(1) Said storage section While storing the game program, it has the set of the game character information are mutually discriminable, as stock information. Said control processing section Based on a certain "information used as a key", the game character information corresponding to the "information used as a key" concerned is taken up out of said stock information. Game equipment characterized by having the buffer which captures some of taken-up game character information concerned, adopting the captured game character information concerned, and advancing a game.

[0014] (2) It is game equipment characterized by having the table on which said storage section recorded the correspondence relation between the above "the information used as a key", and said game character information in the game equipment of the above-mentioned (1) publication, and taking up game character information out of said stock information based on the table concerned.

[0015] (3) Game equipment of the above-mentioned (1) publication characterized by judging game character information corresponding to the above "the information used as a key" by seeing the homology on an image or a property between the image information or property information which were acquired from existing "the information used as a key."

[0016] In the game equipment of the above-mentioned (1) publication (4) Said storage section It has the read-out result storage section which changes and memorizes "the information used as a key" once read to direct or other information. Game equipment characterized by taking up game character information out of said stock information based on "the information used as a key" which is directly [said] the read-out result storage section concerned memorized, or was changed.

[0017] (5) Said output section is game equipment of the above-mentioned (1) publication which is a monitor and is characterized by displaying on a screen the result of having taken up game character information out of said stock information.

* [0018] (6) When the game character information corresponding to the above "the information used as a key" exists in said stock information, said output section While displaying the purport or the game character information that it took up that it succeeded in pickup, as a pickup result Game equipment of the above-mentioned (5) publication characterized by displaying the purport that pickup went wrong, as a pickup result when the game character information corresponding to a reading error or the above "the information used as a key" does not exist in said stock information.

[0019] (7) said -- a stock -- information -- inside -- being the so-called -- a wild card -- corresponding -- a game -- a character -- information -- having -- reading -- an error -- or -- corresponding -- a game -- a character -- information -- said -- a stock -- information -- inside -- not existing -- a case -- **** -- said -- a wild card -- corresponding -- a game -- a character -- information -- assigning -- things -- the description -- ** -- carrying out -- the above -- (-- one --) -- a publication -- a game -- equipment .

[0020] Generally, although a thing like the notation for directing an unspecified alphabetic character and an unspecified word and the joker of cards is meant, a "wild card" shall show the thing of the game character information for assigning, when the game character information that it corresponds [correspond and an error is reading-made] does not exist in said stock information, when calling it "the game character information equivalent to a wild card" by this invention.

[0021] (8) said -- a stock -- information -- inside -- being the so-called -- a wild card -- corresponding -- a game -- a character -- information -- having -- said -- an output -- the section -- reading -- an error -- or -- corresponding -- a game -- a character -- information -- said -- a stock -- information -- inside -- not existing -- a case -- **** -- pickup -- a result -- ***** -- said -- a wild card -- corresponding -- a game -- a character -- information -- having taken up -- a purport -- or -- said -- a wild card -- corresponding -- a game -- a character -- information -- displaying -- things -- the description -- ** -- carrying out -- the above -- (-- five --) -- a publication -- a game -- equipment .

[0022] (9) (8) from the above (1) characterized by the above "the information used as a key" being the bar code information read from the bar code -- either -- the game equipment of a publication.

[0023] (10) Game equipment of the above-mentioned (9) publication characterized by uniting with a bar code reader. In addition, even if dismountable, "being unified" contains, also when it can be regarded as what is unified since the condition of having joined together is very firm.

10014 go
table

[0024] (11) Said bar code reader is game equipment of the above-mentioned (10) publication characterized by being the exposure-type bar code reader which reads a plane bar code.

[0025] (12) the above (10) characterized by said output section displaying the bar code corresponding to the game character information concerned on a screen at coincidence with the game character information which is a monitor and was taken up out of said stock information, or (11) -- either -- the game equipment of a publication.

[0026] (13) (12) from the above (1) characterized by being portable game equipment -- either -- the game equipment of a publication.

[0027] It has the input section, the storage section, the control processing section, and the output section.

(14) Said storage section While storing the game program, it has the set of the game character information are mutually discriminable, as stock information. Said control processing section Based on the bar code information read from a certain bar code, the game character information group corresponding to the bar code information concerned is taken up out of said stock information. Game equipment characterized by giving an opportunity adopting game character information required for advance of a game out of the game character information group concerned to a game player.

[0028] (15) Game equipment of the above-mentioned (1) publication characterized by indicating the game character information captured by said buffer by list.

[0029] (16) Game equipment of the above-mentioned (1) publication characterized by eliminating the game character information captured by said buffer.

[0030] From above this inventions, the thing the "approach of using it as information" used as a key" when taking up a certain specific information out of the group of predetermined information is drawn as the general principle in the information acquired from "bar code. Here, "specific information" means one settlement of information distinguishable from others to extent which can take up, and "the group of predetermined information" says that for which two or more of of the "specific information" concerned gathered.

[0031] Moreover, the following game equipments are offered in this invention.

[0032] It has the input section, the storage section, the control processing section, and the output section.

(17) Said storage section While storing the game program, it has the set of the game character information are mutually discriminable, as stock information. Said control processing section Based on a certain "information used as a key", the game character information corresponding to the "information used as a key" concerned is taken up out of said stock information. Game equipment characterized by differentiating game character information which is game equipment and is taken up based on a factor common to a specific "information used as key" group that adopt the taken-up game character information concerned and a game is advanced.

[0033] (18) A factor common to said specific "information used as key" group is game equipment of the above-mentioned (17) publication characterized by belonging to a certain specific company.

[0034] (19) The above "the information used as a key" is game equipment the above (17) characterized by being the bar code information read from the bar code, or given in (18).

[0035] It has the input section, the storage section, the control processing section, and the output section.

(20) Said storage section While storing the game program, it has the set of the game character information are mutually discriminable, as stock information. Said control processing section Based on a certain "information used as a key", the game character information corresponding to the "information used as a key" concerned is taken up out of said stock information. It has the buffer which captures some of taken-up game character information concerned. Game equipment characterized by differentiating game character information which is game equipment and is taken up based on a factor common to a specific "information used as key" group that adopt the captured game character information concerned and a game is advanced.

[0036] (21) A factor common to said specific "information used as key" group is game equipment of the above-mentioned (20) publication characterized by belonging to a certain specific company.

[0037] (22) The above "the information used as a key" is game equipment the above (20) characterized by being the bar code information read from the bar code, or given in (21).

[0038] From above this inventions, the thing "the approach of using above game equipment as an advertising means" is drawn as the general principle.

[0039] (23) (22) from the above (17) characterized by having a record means to record the count of pickup of the taken-up game character, and an output means to output the contents currently recorded on this record means -- either -- the game equipment of a publication.

[0040] (24) Advertising advertisement equipment equipped with a calculation means to compute those

correlation by contrasting the game equipment of the above-mentioned (23) publication, the data recorded on said record means, and the sales data from a customer company, and a display means to display the result of this calculation means.

[0041] (25) Game equipment for advertising advertisement which serves as an advertising advertisement means of the customer company concerned by differentiating the game character concerning the customer company concerned according to the request from a customer company.

[0042] Although a business-use thing is sufficient also as a thing for home use, if it carries out from a viewpoint of it being made reflecting in a game and enjoying it every time the "game equipment" concerning [terminological definition etc. this inventions <the hard configuration of game equipment>] does not choose a location or reads various bar codes easily especially, portable [equipped with the internal electrical power source (for example, dry cell) / which can be carried], and its thing for home use are desirable. The meaning which it means that a location is not chosen but it can do anywhere especially in a portable case, and applies this invention to portable game equipment is large.

[0043] The "input section" means all media that convey the intention of a game player, such as a carbon button, a touch panel, a lever, and a keyboard.

[0044] The "storage section" is a large concept containing the so-called memory, ROM (Read-Only Memory) and RAM (Random Access Memory), a hard disk, a magneto-optic disk, etc. In the case of semiconductor memory, it may be made to accumulate stock information by nonvolatile memory, and you may make it equip it with a backup power supply apart from the power source over the body of game equipment.

[0045] The "control processing section" is the so-called CPU.

[0046] Although the "output section" means what performs a screen display like a monitor or a liquid crystal display screen, voice shall be uttered in this "output section", or the so-called loudspeaker which announces predetermined information shall also be contained in it.

[0047] A "buffer" means the thing of memory which can capture some of game character information (one game character information is sufficient) taken up out of said stock information.

[0048] In addition, "the bar code reader (bar code reader)" which reads the bar code given to the goods as "information used as a key" etc. is attached in the game equipment of this invention. In this invention, it is suitable as a "bar code reader" to use "the exposure-type bar code reader which reads a plane bar code."

[0049] When the slit-type bar code reader adopted as the game equipment using a bar code from the former here was adopted, in order to let it pass to the slit of this equipment, the bar code given to goods etc. needed to be cut off, but since direct reading can be performed, said exposure-type bar code reader has the advantage which can save the time and effort of cutoff.

[0050] In addition, although direct reading can be performed therefore, that by which a screen display was carried out to the monitor of other game equipments etc. can also be read as it is.

[0051] In addition, as an exposure-type bar code reader which does the same operation effectiveness so, although there are a pen type thing and a thing of a cartridge type, these should be dealt with as the "bar code reader" in this invention, and an equal thing, when the bar code reader which does not pass to what illustrated what exists at present, therefore will do the same operation effectiveness so in the future appears.

[0052] The "bar code information" used as "information used as a key" in > this invention about < bar code information expresses a bar code etc. as an assembly of a white line and the linea nigra, and there are JAN (Japan Article Number) which is JIS, and others in Japan. A fundamental notation is a module and is made combining the white ground (white bar) of constant width, and black figures (black bar). For example, express bar code information using 13 figures, ten figures which the first two figures follow express a firm name and a bar code with the name of a country, and the last 1 character expresses the check character with the standard version of JAN. And among ten figures showing a bar code, 5 figures of the beginning express manufacturer identification code (this is the thing of the proper defined for every manufacturer), and the following 5 figures express the goods item code.

[0053] "Image information" and the "property information" relevant to the bar code information concerned can be acquired from such "bar code information."

[0054] Here, fundamentally, "image information, i.e., "the image information obtained from a certain bar code information", " means the appearance of the goods obtained from a certain bar code information. For example, when the bar code given to can juice is mentioned as an example and explained, the information (goods item code showing the goods [case / of the standard version of said JAN] "can juice") for identifying and specifying is written in there in "can juice", and the goods "can juice" are identified and specified by recognizing this information. This can juice usually has "the appearance that it is long and

slender and cylindrical", and this "appearance that it is long and slender and cylindrical" is equivalent to the image information obtained from the bar code information on can juice.

[0055] On the other hand, "property information, i.e., "the property information acquired from a certain bar code information", " means the property (namely, property with which goods are originally equipped from the attribute of the goods) in which the goods obtained from a certain bar code information are inherent fundamentally. For example, when the bar code given to the nutrition supplement drink is mentioned as an example and explained, the information (goods item code showing the goods [case / of the standard version of said JAN] a "nutrition supplement drink") for identifying and specifying is written in there in the "nutrition supplement drink", and the goods a "nutrition supplement drink" are identified and specified by recognizing this information. Property" that this nutrition supplement drink has "nutrition and effectiveness is usually in power recovery It has and this "property that it is nutritious and effectiveness is in power recovery" is equivalent to the property information acquired from the bar code information on a nutrition supplement drink.

[0056] Furthermore, since "bar code information" differs for every manufacturer, if "bar code information" is used, a certain specific company (manufacturer) is also discriminable from others (in the case of the standard version of said JAN, a certain specific manufacturer is discriminable from others with the manufacturer identification code defined for every manufacturer).

[0057] <Game character information "game character information"> is the thing of the large semantics of "what appears" in a game, and it does not ask about abstract ** that it is concrete. And the information on the game character itself and the information on a background besides the attribute information on a game character (information which shows the property of a game character -- it is strong, large and fearful --) are also included there. As a "game character", abiosis, such as living things, such as people and animals and plants, a vehicle, and a bomb, and also these plasmodia (a monster, ghost, etc.) can be considered, for example.

[0058] Moreover, it is the semantics distinguishable from "being mutually discriminable" that it can specify as a respectively different thing, or can grasp as a thing according to individual, respectively. For example, appearances differ mutually, distinguishable game characters differ from strength mutually, and the game characters which can be grasped as a respectively separate thing "can be identified mutually."

[0059] The correspondence relation of the "bar code information" and the "game character information" of which > **** was done about the relation between < bar code information and game character information is recorded on the table prepared in said storage section.

[0060] Here, "table" means what has specified "beforehand" a certain relation between bar code information and game character information. Therefore, although forward and how reverse and disorderly will not be asked if it is the relation specified beforehand, as desirable correspondence relation, what "the homology on the image between the image information or property information which were acquired from a certain bar code information, or a property" is specified as is mentioned. In this case, a "table" matches and records the image information or property information acquired from a certain bar code information, and a game character (or game item) with many common features on an image or a property.

[0061] About <a judgment "a judgment of the game character information corresponding to bar code information" of the game character information corresponding to bar code information>, it is carried out by seeing "the homology on an image", or "the homology on a property" between the above "the image information obtained from a certain bar code information", or "the property information acquired from a certain bar code information."

[0062] there are many common features on an image (exterior) among "the homology on an image" here -- saying -- as a game character (or game item) with many common features on an image -- for example, in the case of said can juice, the can juice as the game character similar to can juice, the game character which personified can juice, and a game item etc. is assumed.

[0063] "The homology on a property" means that there are many common features on a property (on a property inherent). Moreover, as a game character (or game item) with many common features on a property For example, the game character which plays the role similar to a nutrition supplement drink in the case of said nutrition supplement drink (with the case where own power of a game character is essentially strong) both cases where the power of a game character becomes strong a-posteriori -- containing -- the use as a game item which newly gives activity energy etc. can be considered.

[0064] <pickup "pickup of game character information" of game character information> -- "-- the bar code information read from a certain bar code -- "radical" -- it is carried out. Therefore, it not only taking up the game character information corresponding to the bar code information concerned, but taking up the game

character information corresponding to the bar code information similar to the bar code information concerned shall be included in this invention.

[0065] About <differentiation "differentiation of the game character information taken up" of the game character information taken up>, it is carried out to the bar code information group of "specification based on "common factor".

[0066] Here, "a common factor" means the thing of a certain factor which can identify that he is a certain specific company (for example, manufacturer).

[0067] That is, as mentioned above, "bar code information" includes the factor (in the case of the standard version of said JAN, it is manufacturer identification code) for identifying a certain specific company, and calls "a common factor" the thing used as a factor discriminable from such other companies. Therefore, it is contained in the concept of this "common factor", if each company can be identified [not to mention] by the bar code when the manufacture name and the brand name are contained in the bar code as information as it is in this way.

[0068] Saying "it is differentiated", [of game character information] For example, it says dealing with the bar code of a certain specific company advantageous in a certain form rather than the bar code of other companies. For example, it is possible to perform differentiation "a game character stronger than the case where the bar code given to the cutting pliers of other companies is read can be captured when the bar code given to the cutting pliers of a specific company is read", about goods called cutting pliers. Since this leads to carrying out the advertisement advertisement of the goods concerning the specific company concerned etc., if it does in this way, it can add the advertisement advertising function of a specific company to the game equipment of this invention. Moreover, since it results in being attracted so that the bar codes of the company of the differentiated specification concerned may be collected, and purchasing the goods in order that a game player may obtain a strong game character if it sees in the long run when it does in this way, the customer suction effectiveness is large.

[0069]

[The gestalt for inventing] Hereafter, the suitable operation gestalt for the game equipment concerning this invention is explained, referring to drawing.

[0070] [Equipment configuration] drawing 1 is the block diagram showing the hardware configuration of the game equipment of this invention. The game equipment shown in this drawing 1 is a portable thing individually used in a home, a going-out place, etc., and consists of a cassette 31 which memorized game program 33a, a body 32 of game equipment, and a bar code reader (bar code reader) 40.

[0071] A bar code reader 40 is the exposure-type bar code reader which reads a plane bar code, and a dismountable thing can be used for it as this bar code reader 40. However, in case a bar code is read, it is necessary to unite with the body 32 of game equipment.

[0072] Moreover, the cassette 31 is equipped with ROM (it is equivalent to the "storage section" said by the claim)33 which memorizes two or more image data 33b [besides said game program 33a], two or more voice data 33c, and stock data (stock information) 33d, and table 33e.

[0073] Here, although the program for performing the game of a waging-war mold, for example can be used as game program 33a, in this invention, the program for performing the game of all the types with which a game character appears can be used.

[0074] Stock data 33d, although it is the set of the game character information are mutually discriminable, in this stock information, the game character information equivalent to a wild card is also included.

[0075] Table 33e records the correspondence relation between bar code information and game character information. That is, the mode of taking up the game character information corresponding to the bar code information read from the bar code which specifies the relation between bar code information and game character information to table 33e beforehand (specifically matching the relation between bar code information and game character information beforehand), and has followed the relation concerned in this way is a desirable mode for realizing this invention.

[0076] Furthermore, RAM34 (it is equivalent to the "storage section" which also says this RAM34 by the claim) for the body 32 of game equipment to advance game program 33a, the liquid crystal display unit 35 on which image data 33b of ROM33 is displayed as an image -- and The voice playback unit 36 (these are equivalent to the "output section" said by the claim) which reproduces voice data 33c as voice, It has CPU (it is equivalent to the "control processing section" said by the claim)38 which performs processing of game program 33a etc. in the key input section (it is equivalent to the "input section" said by the claim) 37 for self to input the intention of a game player, and a list. In addition, CPU38 transmits the suitable thing of two or more voice data 33c to the voice playback unit 36 while it orders advance of game program 33a and

more specifically transmits the suitable thing of two or more image data 33b to the liquid crystal display unit 35 according to advance of this game program 33a, and the key input of a game player.

[0077] Although RAM34 memorizes the contents (game program 33a, image data 33b, voice data 33c) of ROM33 of a cassette 31, it has the function (function as a "buffer" said by the claim) to capture some of game character information (for one game character information to be sufficient) taken up out of said stock information.

[0078] In addition, RAM34 also has the function (function as the "read-out result storage section" said by the claim) to change and memorize the bar code information once read by the bar code reader 40 to direct or other information (for example, G code mentioned later).

[0079] Moreover, CPU38 also has the function to take up the game character information corresponding to the bar code information concerned out of said stock data 33d based on the bar code information read from a certain bar code, to adopt the game character information concerned as it, and to advance a game. In addition, CPU38 has realized this function by performing said game program 33a.

[0080] [Explanation of operation] Actuation of the game equipment of this invention is explained below. Drawing 2 and drawing 3 are flow charts which show the flow of actuation of the game equipment of this invention.

[0081] The 1st example about pickup actuation of the <1st example of pickup actuation of game character information> game character information is explained using drawing 2.

[0082] A game player prepares the goods to which the desired bar code was given, applies a bar code reader 40 to the bar code concerned directly and reads the bar code concerned to capture a new game character. Then, the read bar code information is sent out to the body 32 of game equipment.

[0083] In the body 32 of game equipment, if bar code information is inputted (step A1), retrieval of table 33e of ROM33 of a cassette 31 will be performed by CPU38 (step A2), and there will be bar code information which is in agreement with table 33e, or (is the entry of the bar code information concerned carried out to table 33e?) it will be judged (step A3).

[0084] When bar code information in agreement exists, CPU38 takes up the game character information corresponding to the bar code information concerned out of stock data 33d (from the Yes root of step A3 to step A4). For example, when the bar code given to can juice is read, the game character information (for example, the game character similar to can juice, the game character which personified can juice) matched with the bar code information concerned in table 33e is taken up. Moreover, when the bar code given to the nutrition supplement drink is read, the game character information (for example, game character which plays the role similar to a nutrition supplement drink) matched with the bar code information concerned in table 33e is taken up.

[0085] In this invention, although it pools the properties (it is strong, is large and are fearful) of a game character besides in the case of taking up a game character out of the stock of the game character itself in this way as a stock in saying, "Game character information is taken up", also when taking up the one or property beyond it from inside and giving the taken-up property concerned to a game character, it is contained. That is, it is contained in this invention also when determining the property of a game character using the information taken up out of a stock.

[0086] On the other hand, when bar code information in agreement does not exist (it contains also when it is a reading error), CPU38 takes up the game character information which is equivalent to a wild card out of stock data 33d (from No root of step A3 to step A5). Here when [this / "when bar code information in agreement does not exist"] The case where the bar code information and match are not in table 33e from the first, The case where there are no bar code information and match which have been incorrect-recognized by table 33e since the reading error (incorrect recognition) of the bar code of said request took place, Since the reading error (recognition impossible) of the bar code of said request took place, bar code information has not been recognized and the retrieval of table 33e itself may not have been completed. In such a case, since it is specified that it takes up the game character information equivalent to a wild card to table 33e, the game character information which is equivalent to a wild card based on table 33e is taken up.

[0087] Then, the liquid crystal display unit 35 displays on a screen the result of having taken up game character information (step A6). When bar code information in agreement exists, the purport that game character information was taken up, or its game character information that it took up is displayed as a pickup result. On the other hand, when bar code information in agreement does not exist, the game character information equivalent to the purport that the game character information equivalent to said wild card was taken up as a pickup result, or said wild card is displayed.

[0088] In addition, in taking up game character information again, CPU38 takes up game character

information out of said stock data 33d based on the bar code information (the bar code information itself or changed bar code information) memorized by RAM34.

[0089] The 2nd example about pickup actuation of the <2nd example of pickup actuation of game character information> game character information is explained using drawing 3. In this 2nd example, although the pickup actuation when not using table 33e is explained, fundamental actuation is the same as that of the case of the 1st above-mentioned example.

[0090] In the body 32 of game equipment, an input of the bar code information read like the case of the 1st above-mentioned example judges whether there is any bar code information [be / it / under / of stock data 33d / correspondence] by CPU38 (step B-2). (step B1) Here, the judgment of whether there is any corresponding bar code information is performed by seeing the homology on an image or a property between the image information or property information which were acquired from a certain bar code information.

[0091] And when corresponding bar code information exists, CPU38 takes up the game character information corresponding to the bar code information concerned out of stock data 33d (from the Yes root of step B-2 to step B3).

[0092] On the other hand, when corresponding bar code information does not exist (it contains also when it is a reading error), CPU38 assigns the game character information equivalent to said wild card, and takes up the game character information which is equivalent to a wild card out of stock data 33d (from No root of step B-2 to step B4).

[0093] Then, the liquid crystal display unit 35 displays on a screen the result of having taken up game character information (step B5).

[0094] In addition, also in this 2nd example, in taking up game character information again, CPU38 takes up game character information out of said stock data 33d based on the bar code information (the bar code information itself or changed bar code information) memorized by RAM34.

[0095] Although CPU38 had taken up one game character information based on bar code information, it takes up two or more game character information (game character information group) that it corresponded to the bar code information concerned, and you may make it capture it to RAM34 in the 1st and 2nd <3rd example of pickup actuation of game character information> above-mentioned example.

[0096] That is, in the 1st and 2nd above-mentioned example, although bar code information and game character information are matched by one to one, in this 3rd example, two or more game character information is matched with one bar code information.

[0097] If it does in this way, since a game player can choose a favorite thing out of two or more game characters, it can raise the palatability of a game more.

[0098] In this case, the captured game character information may be indicated by list, or you may make it eliminate the game character information which became unnecessary.

[0099] In addition, also in this 3rd example, it is the same as that of the case of the 1st and 2nd above-mentioned example in itself [fundamental / of operation].

[0100] The game equipment of data-exchange actuation > this invention between game equipment besides < can also display the bar code corresponding to the game character information concerned itself on a screen with the game character information taken up by the liquid crystal display unit 35 at coincidence.

[0101] Thus, the game player which is using other game equipments is because this bar code by which a screen display was carried out can be read by the bar code reader as it is, and it can perform the data exchange among other game equipments that we decided to display on a screen also in itself [bar code], without this applying the time and effort of cutoff of a bar code.

[0102] In the game equipment of <use as advertising means of above-mentioned game equipment> this invention, it may be made to differentiate game character information taken up based on a certain factor (a certain factor which can specifically identify that he is a certain specific company) common to the specific bar code information group in which the bar code information of a specific company comes to gather. If it does in this way, the above-mentioned game equipment can be used as an advertising means.

[0103] It explains using the flow chart which shows the actuation in this case to drawing 11.

[0104] First, operating activities are carried out and the company which receives offer of "service (henceforth service) of using the above-mentioned game equipment as an advertising means" is looked for (step C1).

[0105] If the service application from a company is received (step C2), it will set up so that a character strong against the bar code given to the goods of that company etc. may be assigned, and these contents of a setting will be included in the game equipment of this invention (step C3).

[0106] The game equipment of such this invention is sold and the game equipment is used for many game players. Since the bar code of said company to which the strong character was assigned is inevitably chosen at this time, reputation "the bar code of the goods of A company (that company name) is good" will be formed, and, thereby, that company can enjoy an effect of advertising (step C4).

[0107] And an effect of advertising is fed back to a game equipment manufacture manufacturer and said company (step C5). For example, in order to judge the quality of a setup of a character performed at said step C3 to a game equipment manufacture manufacturer, "the sales of game equipment" and "the operating frequency of the character" for which it asked using the consumer monitor are fed back. Moreover, in order to report the effect of advertising obtained at said step C4 to said company, "the difference of the sales of the goods in comparison with service application before" is fed back.

[0108] After that, the processing from said step C1 is repeated suitably.

[0109] In addition, in this invention, "a record means to record the count of pickup of the taken-up game character" is equivalent to RAM34 (refer to drawing 1). "An output means to output the contents currently recorded on this record means" is equivalent to the liquid crystal display unit 35 (refer to drawing 1). "A calculation means to compute those correlation by contrasting the data and the sales data from a customer company which were recorded on said record means" is equivalent to CPU38 (refer to drawing 1), and "a display means to display the result of this calculation means" is equivalent to the liquid crystal display unit 35 (refer to drawing 1).

[0110] When the purport that it succeeded in pickup is displayed or there is no game character information equivalent to a wild card in table 33e, you may make it display the purport that pickup went wrong, in the game equipment of <other> this inventions, when displaying a pickup result.

[0111] Moreover, it restricts, when a bar code is read in predetermined time, and you may enable it to capture a game character in the game equipment of this invention. For example, it restricts, when the bar code concerned is read between 3:00 and 4:00 which are the time zone which eats a snack, and you may enable it to capture the corresponding game character speaking of the bar code of snack confectionery.

[0112] In addition, in this specification, although the case where read a "bar code" as "information used as a key", and a game character was captured was explained, this invention may be applied, when reading the gym star code (G code) which is the figure indicated by the lower part section of a bar code and capturing a game character.

[0113] Moreover, this invention may be applied, when recognizing voice (people's voice, music, etc.) as "information used as a key" and capturing a game character.

[0114]

[Example] [1st example] this invention is applicable to portable game equipment as shown in drawing 4 . Here, the game equipment which drawing 4 shows the game equipment concerning the 1st example of this invention, and is shown in this drawing 4 consists of bar code readers 42 of the body 41 of game equipment, and an exposure type. In addition, the cassette 31 shown in drawing 1 and the game cassette which has the same function are made to be inserted in the body 41 of game equipment.

[0115] A bar code reader 42 can read bar code information easily, and is used as a peripheral device in game equipment. This bar code reader 42 is making the function to transmit the bar code information acquired by trying to connect with the communication link terminal (not shown) of the body 41 of game equipment, and reading the bar code of arbitration to the body 41 of game equipment through a communication link terminal have.

[0116] In addition, in this drawing 4 , the manual operation button on which a sign 43 functions as the "input section", the liquid crystal display screen on which a sign 44 functions as the "output section", and a sign 45 show the loudspeaker section which functions as the "output section" too.

[0117] While inserting a game cassette in the body 41 of game equipment in case a game character is captured if concrete employment of this game equipment is explained, a bar code reader 42 is connected to a communication link terminal. And a game is started in such the condition.

[0118] If a desired bar code is read by the bar code reader 42 during activation of a game, by the body 41 of game equipment, the read data will be recognized as bar code information. For example, when the bar code given to the can of oolong tea is read, it is recognized to be data of oolong tea and it analyzes to information, such as a manufacturer and a price.

[0119] And in game equipment, pickup actuation of a game character which was mentioned above is performed using this bar code information. In addition, the example of a game character is shown in drawing 6 - drawing 8 , and the example of the table used for below in the case of pickup is shown.

[0120]

[Table 1]

[0121] Moreover, this game equipment can carry out bar code computerization of the capacity data of a game character etc., and can also display them on the liquid crystal display screen 44. The displayed bar code information can be read by the bar code reader of other game equipments. On the contrary, the bar code reader 42 of this game equipment can also read the bar code information displayed on the liquid crystal display screen of other bodies of game equipment. Therefore, communication link waging war, exchange of data, etc. can be performed in a completely new form.

[0122] In addition, [0123] which can read bar code information easily even if it can also use a bar code reader as shown in drawing 5 R> 5 (a) and drawing 5 (b) instead of a bar code reader 42 and uses these bar code readers The bar code reader 46 shown in drawing 5 (a) is a pen type [exposure-type] bar code reader, is equipped with bar code read station (scanner) 46c, communication link terminal strapping section (code) 46a, and power supply section (dc-battery) 46b, and is constituted. Here, power supply section 46b is an original power source (AA or dry cell of AAA). Furthermore, although illustration is not carried out, the bar code reader 46 has the electric power switch that ON/OFF of a power source should be made possible.

[0124] Moreover, the bar code reader 47 shown in drawing 5 (b) is a bar code reader of an exposure-type cartridge type, is equipped with bar code read station 47a, and a power supply section / connection 47b, and is constituted.

[0125] These bar code readers 46 and 47 can also read bar code information, and can transmit it to the body 41 of game equipment.

[0126] Moreover, if the manual entry of the numeric data of a bar code is carried out or the numeric data of a bar code is transmitted from other game equipments even if this game equipment does not read a bar code by the bar code reader, it can also recognize the inputted information as bar code information. Therefore, even if it uses the bar code information which carried out in this way and was acquired, a game character can newly be captured.

[0127] The [2nd example] This invention is also applicable to portable game equipment as shown in drawing 9 again.

[0128] Here, drawing 9 shows the game equipment concerning the 2nd example of this invention, and also

constitutes this game equipment from a bar code reader (not shown in drawing 9) of the body 21 of game equipment, the game cassette 22, and a dismountable exposure type.

[0129] In addition, in this drawing 9 , the manual operation button on which signs 23 and 24 function as the "input section", the liquid crystal display screen on which a sign 25 functions as the "output section", the loudspeaker section on which a sign 26 functions as the "output section" too, and a sign 27 show the connection terminal of a bar code reader.

[0130] Also in such game equipment, a game character can be captured like the thing of the 1st example.

[0131] The [3rd example] This invention is also applicable to game equipment for home use as shown in drawing 10 again.

[0132] Here, drawing 10 shows the game equipment concerning the 3rd example of this invention, and the same portable game equipment 11 as the 1st and 2nd example mentioned above and the game equipment 10 by which this game equipment 11 is inserted constitute this game equipment. In addition, in drawing 10 , sign 10a is the insertion slot of game equipment 11, and the manual operation button on which a sign 12 functions as the "input section", and a sign 13 are liquid crystal display screens which function as the "output section."

[0133] Namely, in this game equipment for home use, game equipment 10 functions as a main phone, portable game equipment 11 is functioning as a cordless handset, respectively, and game equipment 10 can perform a game now using the game character captured with portable game equipment 11 by inserting portable game equipment 11 in game equipment 10, and connecting.

[0134] When performing the game using the game character captured newly according to this game equipment for home use, usage that portable game equipment 11 performs at a going-out place, and game equipment 10 performs at home can also be carried out.

[0135]

[Effect of the Invention] Since inputted bar code information and game character information that it corresponds are captured out of the storage section according to the game equipment of this invention (or pickup), a game character can be captured without performing complicated processing of an operation etc. Therefore, the palatability of a game and enjoyableness can be raised, making game equipment simple.

[0136] Moreover, since the exposure-type bar code reader which reads a plane bar code is adopted according to this invention, the bar code given to goods etc. can be read directly. Therefore, the time and effort of cutoff of the required bar code can be saved with conventional game equipment, and also that by which a screen display was carried out to the monitor of other game equipments etc. can also be read as it is.

[0137] Furthermore, since according to this invention two or more game character information (game character information group) that it corresponds can also be taken up when one bar code information is inputted, if it does in this way, an opportunity to choose a desired game character can be given to a game player, and the palatability of a game can be raised more.

[0138] Furthermore, since game character information can also be differentiated according to this invention, if it does in this way, the advertisement advertising function of a specific company can be added to the game equipment of this invention.

[Translation done.]

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1. This document has been translated by computer. So the translation may not reflect the original precisely.
2. **** shows the word which can not be translated.
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[Detailed Description of the Invention]

[0001]

[Field of the Invention] This invention relates to the game equipment which can perform a game using the game character which read the bar code given to goods etc. and chose it according to the read data.

[0002]

[Description of the Prior Art] Much game equipments which perform a game from before using the card which indicated the data required for a game by the bar code as home video game equipment are known.

[0003] If the example of such game equipment is shown, the bar code displayed on the card is read to JP,5-30475,B, and the card game toy which cards are opposed according to the read bar code data, and determines the victory or defeat of a game is indicated.

[0004] Moreover, the bar code type TV game which takes out the image output containing the game character reads the bar code displayed on the card to JP,7-121293,B, calculates to it for a TV game, and it is decided with bar code data that will be it is indicated.

[0005] Furthermore, the bar code of a card is read, and while changing the read bar code data into other information and determining the contents of a game according to said information, conversion to signals and the voice-ized card game toy are indicated by JP,5-307634,A in the contents of a game.

[0006] Although much game equipments which use a bar code besides these are known, if a bar code is used, since it can carry out quickly [actuation of a game], and exactly, an oppressive feeling can be given to a game. When the decision of a game character or the contents of a game, and conversion to signals and voice-izing are made to be performed with this based on bar code data, the contents of a game which evoke the interest of a player can be started simply, and the enjoyableness of a game improves.

[0007]

[Problem(s) to be Solved by the Invention] Thus, also in conventional game equipment, although the various devices for raising the enjoyableness of a game are made, it is necessary to raise the enjoyableness of a game further to compensate for change of a need person's taste.

[0008] This invention is made by the basis of such a tidal current, and the purpose is in adding the element which can raise palatability and enjoyableness more in the game equipment which used bar code data.

[0009]

[Means for Solving the Problem] In order to attain the above purposes, in the game equipment concerning this invention, it is characterized by capturing game character information corresponding to the bar code information concerned out of the storage section based on the bar code information (bar code data) read from a certain bar code (or pickup), adopting the captured game character information concerned as it, and advancing a game.

[0010] That is, in conventional game equipment, bar code information serves as a tool for capturing a game character in the game equipment concerning this invention to bar code information having been the data required for the play of a game itself. In other words, in this invention, bar code information is positioned as information ("information used as a key") used as the key for capturing a certain game character information. In addition, in this invention, it uses not in the semantics of "information "whose information used as a key" is and which is inputted through the means for specifying a certain recognized object uniquely" but in the semantics of "the information used as the cause at the time of choosing a certain object from a certain ensemble accidentally". [like the information inputted from a keyboard, a touch panel, etc.]

[0011] Moreover, in conventional game equipment, by calculating using bar code information, a game character and the contents of a game are determined, or game character information is taken up out of the stock prepared beforehand

in the game equipment applied to this invention to conversion to signals and having voice-ized in the contents of a game, and it is used for a game. Therefore, according to this invention, a game character can be determined based on this difference, without performing the operation using bar code information.

[0012] More specifically in this invention, the following game equipments are offered.

[0013] It has the input section, the storage section, the control processing section, and the output section. (1) Said storage section While storing the game program, it has the set of the game character information are mutually discriminable, as stock information. Said control processing section Based on a certain "information used as a key", the game character information corresponding to the "information used as a key" concerned is taken up out of said stock information. Game equipment characterized by having the buffer which captures some of taken-up game character information concerned, adopting the captured game character information concerned, and advancing a game.

[0014] (2) It is game equipment characterized by having the table on which said storage section recorded the correspondence relation between the above "the information used as a key", and said game character information in the game equipment of the above-mentioned (1) publication, and taking up game character information out of said stock information based on the table concerned.

[0015] (3) Game equipment of the above-mentioned (1) publication characterized by judging game character information corresponding to the above "the information used as a key" by seeing the homology on an image or a property between the image information or property information which were acquired from existing "the information used as a key."

[0016] In the game equipment of the above-mentioned (1) publication (4) Said storage section It has the read-out result storage section which changes and memorizes "the information used as a key" once read to direct or other information. Game equipment characterized by taking up game character information out of said stock information based on "the information used as a key" which is directly [said] the read-out result storage section concerned memorized, or was changed.

[0017] (5) Said output section is game equipment of the above-mentioned (1) publication which is a monitor and is characterized by displaying on a screen the result of having taken up game character information out of said stock information.

[0018] (6) When the game character information corresponding to the above "the information used as a key" exists in said stock information, said output section While displaying the purport or the game character information that it took up that it succeeded in pickup, as a pickup result Game equipment of the above-mentioned (5) publication characterized by displaying the purport that pickup went wrong, as a pickup result when the game character information corresponding to a reading error or the above "the information used as a key" does not exist in said stock information.

[0019] (7) said -- a stock -- information -- inside -- being the so-called -- a wild card -- corresponding -- a game -- a character -- information -- having -- reading -- an error -- or -- corresponding -- a game -- a character -- information -- said -- a stock -- information -- inside -- not existing -- a case -- **** -- said -- a wild card -- corresponding -- a game -- a character -- information -- assigning -- things -- the description -- ** -- carrying out -- the above -- (-- one --) -- a publication -- a game -- equipment .

[0020] Generally, although a thing like the notation for directing an unspecified alphabetic character and an unspecified word and the joker of cards is meant, a "wild card" shall show the thing of the game character information for assigning, when the game character information that it corresponds [correspond and an error is reading-made] does not exist in said stock information, when calling it "the game character information equivalent to a wild card" by this invention.

[0021] (8) said -- a stock -- information -- inside -- being the so-called -- a wild card -- corresponding -- a game -- a character -- information -- having -- said -- an output -- the section -- reading -- an error -- or -- corresponding -- a game -- a character -- information -- said -- a stock -- information -- inside -- not existing -- a case -- **** -- pickup -- a result -- ***** -- said -- a wild card -- corresponding -- a game -- a character -- information -- having taken up -- a purport -- or -- said -- a wild card -- corresponding -- a game -- a character -- information -- displaying -- things -- the description -- ** -- carrying out -- the above -- (-- five --) -- a publication -- a game -- equipment .

[0022] (9) (8) from the above (1) characterized by the above "the information used as a key" being the bar code information read from the bar code -- either -- the game equipment of a publication.

[0023] (10) Game equipment of the above-mentioned (9) publication characterized by uniting with a bar code reader. In addition, even if dismountable, "being unified" contains, also when it can be regarded as what is unified since the condition of having joined together is very firm.

[0024] (11) Said bar code reader is game equipment of the above-mentioned (10) publication characterized by being the exposure-type bar code reader which reads a plane bar code.

[0025] (12) the above (10) characterized by said output section displaying the bar code corresponding to the game character information concerned on a screen at coincidence with the game character information which is a monitor and was taken up out of said stock information, or (11) -- either -- the game equipment of a publication.

[0026] (13) (12) from the above (1) characterized by being portable game equipment -- either -- the game equipment of a publication.

[0027] It has the input section, the storage section, the control processing section, and the output section. (14) Said storage section While storing the game program, it has the set of the game character information are mutually discriminable, as stock information. Said control processing section Based on the bar code information read from a certain bar code, the game character information group corresponding to the bar code information concerned is taken up out of said stock information. Game equipment characterized by giving an opportunity adopting game character information required for advance of a game out of the game character information group concerned to a game player.

[0028] (15) Game equipment of the above-mentioned (1) publication characterized by indicating the game character information captured by said buffer by list.

[0029] (16) Game equipment of the above-mentioned (1) publication characterized by eliminating the game character information captured by said buffer.

[0030] From above this inventions, the thing the "approach of using it as information" used as a key" when taking up a certain specific information out of the group of predetermined information is drawn as the general principle in the information acquired from "bar code. Here, "specific information" means one settlement of information distinguishable from others to extent which can take up, and "the group of predetermined information" says that for which two or more of of the "specific information" concerned gathered.

[0031] Moreover, the following game equipments are offered in this invention.

[0032] It has the input section, the storage section, the control processing section, and the output section. (17) Said storage section While storing the game program, it has the set of the game character information are mutually discriminable, as stock information. Said control processing section Based on a certain "information used as a key", the game character information corresponding to the "information used as a key" concerned is taken up out of said stock information. Game equipment characterized by differentiating game character information which is game equipment and is taken up based on a factor common to a specific "information used as key" group that adopt the taken-up game character information concerned and a game is advanced.

[0033] (18) A factor common to said specific "information used as key" group is game equipment of the above-mentioned (17) publication characterized by belonging to a certain specific company.

[0034] (19) The above "the information used as a key" is game equipment the above (17) characterized by being the bar code information read from the bar code, or given in (18).

[0035] It has the input section, the storage section, the control processing section, and the output section. (20) Said storage section While storing the game program, it has the set of the game character information are mutually discriminable, as stock information. Said control processing section Based on a certain "information used as a key", the game character information corresponding to the "information used as a key" concerned is taken up out of said stock information. It has the buffer which captures some of taken-up game character information concerned. Game equipment characterized by differentiating game character information which is game equipment and is taken up based on a factor common to a specific "information used as key" group that adopt the captured game character information concerned and a game is advanced.

[0036] (21) A factor common to said specific "information used as key" group is game equipment of the above-mentioned (20) publication characterized by belonging to a certain specific company.

[0037] (22) The above "the information used as a key" is game equipment the above (20) characterized by being the bar code information read from the bar code, or given in (21).

[0038] From above this inventions, the thing "the approach of using above game equipment as an advertising means" is drawn as the general principle.

[0039] (23) (22) from the above (17) characterized by having a record means to record the count of pickup of the taken-up game character, and an output means to output the contents currently recorded on this record means -- either -- the game equipment of a publication.

[0040] (24) Advertising advertisement equipment equipped with a calculation means to compute those correlation by contrasting the game equipment of the above-mentioned (23) publication, the data recorded on said record means, and the sales data from a customer company, and a display means to display the result of this calculation means.

[0041] (25) Game equipment for advertising advertisement which serves as an advertising advertisement means of the customer company concerned by differentiating the game character concerning the customer company concerned

according to the request from a customer company.

[0042] Although a business-use thing is sufficient also as a thing for home use, if it carries out from a viewpoint of it being made reflecting in a game and enjoying it every time the "game equipment" concerning [terminological definition etc. this inventions <the hard configuration of game equipment>] does not choose a location or reads various bar codes easily especially, portable [equipped with the internal electrical power source (for example, dry cell) / which can be carried], and its thing for home use are desirable. The meaning which it means that a location is not chosen but it can do anywhere especially in a portable case, and applies this invention to portable game equipment is large.

[0043] The "input section" means all media that convey the intention of a game player, such as a carbon button, a touch panel, a lever, and a keyboard.

[0044] The "storage section" is a large concept containing the so-called memory, ROM (Read-Only Memory) and RAM (Random Access Memory), a hard disk, a magneto-optic disk, etc. In the case of semiconductor memory, it may be made to accumulate stock information by nonvolatile memory, and you may make it equip it with a backup power supply apart from the power source over the body of game equipment.

[0045] The "control processing section" is the so-called CPU.

[0046] Although the "output section" means what performs a screen display like a monitor or a liquid crystal display screen, voice shall be uttered in this "output section", or the so-called loudspeaker which announces predetermined information shall also be contained in it.

[0047] A "buffer" means the thing of memory which can capture some of game character information (one game character information is sufficient) taken up out of said stock information.

[0048] In addition, "the bar code reader (bar code reader)" which reads the bar code given to the goods as "information used as a key" etc. is attached in the game equipment of this invention. In this invention, it is suitable as a "bar code reader" to use "the exposure-type bar code reader which reads a plane bar code."

[0049] When the slit-type bar code reader adopted as the game equipment using a bar code from the former here was adopted, in order to let it pass to the slit of this equipment, the bar code given to goods etc. needed to be cut off, but since direct reading can be performed, said exposure-type bar code reader has the advantage which can save the time and effort of cutoff.

[0050] In addition, although direct reading can be performed therefore, that by which a screen display was carried out to the monitor of other game equipments etc. can also be read as it is.

[0051] In addition, as an exposure-type bar code reader which does the same operation effectiveness so, although there are a pen type thing and a thing of a cartridge type, these should be dealt with as the "bar code reader" in this invention, and an equal thing, when the bar code reader which does not pass to what illustrated what exists at present, therefore will do the same operation effectiveness so in the future appears.

[0052] The "bar code information" used as "information used as a key" in > this invention about < bar code information expresses a bar code etc. as an assembly of a white line and the linea nigra, and there are JAN (Japan Article Number) which is JIS, and others in Japan. A fundamental notation is a module and is made combining the white ground (white bar) of constant width, and black figures (black bar). For example, express bar code information using 13 figures, ten figures which the first two figures follow express a firm name and a bar code with the name of a country, and the last 1 character expresses the check character with the standard version of JAN. And among ten figures showing a bar code, 5 figures of the beginning express manufacturer identification code (this is the thing of the proper defined for every manufacturer), and the following 5 figures express the goods item code.

[0053] "Image information" and the "property information" relevant to the bar code information concerned can be acquired from such "bar code information."

[0054] Here, fundamentally, "image information, i.e., "the image information obtained from a certain bar code information", " means the appearance of the goods obtained from a certain bar code information. For example, when the bar code given to can juice is mentioned as an example and explained, the information (goods item code showing the goods [case / of the standard version of said JAN] "can juice") for identifying and specifying is written in there in "can juice", and the goods "can juice" are identified and specified by recognizing this information. This can juice usually has "the appearance that it is long and slender and cylindrical", and this "appearance that it is long and slender and cylindrical" is equivalent to the image information obtained from the bar code information on can juice.

[0055] On the other hand, "property information, i.e., "the property information acquired from a certain bar code information", " means the property (namely, property with which goods are originally equipped from the attribute of the goods) in which the goods obtained from a certain bar code information are inherent fundamentally. For example, when the bar code given to the nutrition supplement drink is mentioned as an example and explained, the information (goods item code showing the goods [case / of the standard version of said JAN] a "nutrition supplement drink") for

identifying and specifying is written in there in the "nutrition supplement drink", and the goods a "nutrition supplement drink" are identified and specified by recognizing this information. Property" that this nutrition supplement drink has "nutrition and effectiveness is usually in power recovery It has and this "property that it is nutritious and effectiveness is in power recovery" is equivalent to the property information acquired from the bar code information on a nutrition supplement drink.

[0056] Furthermore, since "bar code information" differs for every manufacturer, if "bar code information" is used, a certain specific company (manufacturer) is also discriminable from others (in the case of the standard version of said JAN, a certain specific manufacturer is discriminable from others with the manufacturer identification code defined for every manufacturer).

[0057] <Game character information "game character information"> is the thing of the large semantics of "what appears" in a game, and it does not ask about abstract ** that it is concrete. And the information on the game character itself and the information on a background besides the attribute information on a game character (information which shows the property of a game character -- it is strong, large and fearful --) are also included there. As a "game character", abiosis, such as living things, such as people and animals and plants, a vehicle, and a bomb, and also these plasmodia (a monster, ghost, etc.) can be considered, for example.

[0058] Moreover, it is the semantics distinguishable from "being mutually discriminable" that it can specify as a respectively different thing, or can grasp as a thing according to individual, respectively. For example, appearances differ mutually, distinguishable game characters differ from strength mutually, and the game characters which can be grasped as a respectively separate thing "can be identified mutually."

[0059] The correspondence relation of the "bar code information" and the "game character information" of which > **** was done about the relation between < bar code information and game character information is recorded on the table prepared in said storage section.

[0060] Here, "table" means what has specified "beforehand" a certain relation between bar code information and game character information. Therefore, although forward and how reverse and disorderly will not be asked if it is the relation specified beforehand, as desirable correspondence relation, what "the homology on the image between the image information or property information which were acquired from a certain bar code information, or a property" is specified as is mentioned. In this case, a "table" matches and records the image information or property information acquired from a certain bar code information, and a game character (or game item) with many common features on an image or a property.

[0061] About <a judgment "a judgment of the game character information corresponding to bar code information" of the game character information corresponding to bar code information>, it is carried out by seeing "the homology on an image", or "the homology on a property" between the above "the image information obtained from a certain bar code information", or "the property information acquired from a certain bar code information."

[0062] there are many common features on an image (exterior) among "the homology on an image" here -- saying -- as a game character (or game item) with many common features on an image -- for example, in the case of said can juice, the can juice as the game character similar to can juice, the game character which personified can juice, and a game item etc. is assumed.

[0063] "The homology on a property" means that there are many common features on a property (on a property inherent). Moreover, as a game character (or game item) with many common features on a property For example, the game character which plays the role similar to a nutrition supplement drink in the case of said nutrition supplement drink (with the case where own power of a game character is essentially strong) both cases where the power of a game character becomes strong a-posteriori -- containing -- the use as a game item which newly gives activity energy etc. can be considered.

[0064] <pickup "pickup of game character information" of game character information> -- "-- the bar code information read from a certain bar code -- "radical"" -- it is carried out. Therefore, it not only taking up the game character information corresponding to the bar code information concerned, but taking up the game character information corresponding to the bar code information similar to the bar code information concerned shall be included in this invention.

[0065] About <differentiation "differentiation of the game character information taken up" of the game character information taken up>, it is carried out to the bar code information group of "specification based on "common factor".

[0066] Here, "a common factor" means the thing of a certain factor which can identify that he is a certain specific company (for example, manufacturer).

[0067] That is, as mentioned above, "bar code information" includes the factor (in the case of the standard version of said JAN, it is manufacturer identification code) for identifying a certain specific company, and calls "a common

factor" the thing used as a factor discriminable from such other companies. Therefore, it is contained in the concept of this "common factor", if each company can be identified [not to mention] by the bar code when the manufacture name and the brand name are contained in the bar code as information as it is in this way.

[0068] Saying "it is differentiated", [of game character information] For example, it says dealing with the bar code of a certain specific company advantageous in a certain form rather than the bar code of other companies. For example, it is possible to perform differentiation "a game character stronger than the case where the bar code given to the cutting pliers of other companies is read can be captured when the bar code given to the cutting pliers of a specific company is read", about goods called cutting pliers. Since this leads to carrying out the advertisement advertisement of the goods concerning the specific company concerned etc., if it does in this way, it can add the advertisement advertising function of a specific company to the game equipment of this invention. Moreover, since it results in being attracted so that the bar codes of the company of the differentiated specification concerned may be collected, and purchasing the goods in order that a game player may obtain a strong game character if it sees in the long run when it does in this way, the customer suction effectiveness is large.

[0069]

[The gestalt for inventing] Hereafter, the suitable operation gestalt for the game equipment concerning this invention is explained, referring to drawing.

[0070] [Equipment configuration] drawing 1 is the block diagram showing the hardware configuration of the game equipment of this invention. The game equipment shown in this drawing 1 is a portable thing individually used in a home, a going-out place, etc., and consists of a cassette 31 which memorized game program 33a, a body 32 of game equipment, and a bar code reader (bar code reader) 40.

[0071] A bar code reader 40 is the exposure-type bar code reader which reads a plane bar code, and a dismountable thing can be used for it as this bar code reader 40. However, in case a bar code is read, it is necessary to unite with the body 32 of game equipment.

[0072] Moreover, the cassette 31 is equipped with ROM (it is equivalent to the "storage section" said by the claim)33 which memorizes two or more image data 33b [besides said game program 33a], two or more voice data 33c, and stock data (stock information) 33d, and table 33e.

[0073] Here, although the program for performing the game of a waging-war mold, for example can be used as game program 33a, in this invention, the program for performing the game of all the types with which a game character appears can be used.

[0074] Stock data 33d, although it is the set of the game character information are mutually discriminable, in this stock information, the game character information equivalent to a wild card is also included.

[0075] Table 33e records the correspondence relation between bar code information and game character information. That is, the mode of taking up the game character information corresponding to the bar code information read from the bar code which specifies the relation between bar code information and game character information to table 33e beforehand (specifically matching the relation between bar code information and game character information beforehand), and has followed the relation concerned in this way is a desirable mode for realizing this invention.

[0076] Furthermore, RAM34 (it is equivalent to the "storage section" which also says this RAM34 by the claim) for the body 32 of game equipment to advance game program 33a, the liquid crystal display unit 35 on which image data 33b of ROM33 is displayed as an image -- and The voice playback unit 36 (these are equivalent to the "output section" said by the claim) which reproduces voice data 33c as voice, It has CPU (it is equivalent to the "control processing section" said by the claim)38 which performs processing of game program 33a etc. in the key input section (it is equivalent to the "input section" said by the claim) 37 for self to input the intention of a game player, and a list. In addition, CPU38 transmits the suitable thing of two or more voice data 33c to the voice playback unit 36 while it orders advance of game program 33a and more specifically transmits the suitable thing of two or more image data 33b to the liquid crystal display unit 35 according to advance of this game program 33a, and the key input of a game player.

[0077] Although RAM34 memorizes the contents (game program 33a, image data 33b, voice data 33c) of ROM33 of a cassette 31, it has the function (function as a "buffer" said by the claim) to capture some of game character information (for one game character information to be sufficient) taken up out of said stock information.

[0078] In addition, RAM34 also has the function (function as the "read-out result storage section" said by the claim) to change and memorize the bar code information once read by the bar code reader 40 to direct or other information (for example, G code mentioned later).

[0079] Moreover, CPU38 also has the function to take up the game character information corresponding to the bar code information concerned out of said stock data 33d based on the bar code information read from a certain bar code, to adopt the game character information concerned as it, and to advance a game. In addition, CPU38 has realized this

function by performing said game program 33a.

[0080] [Explanation of operation] Actuation of the game equipment of this invention is explained below. Drawing 2 and drawing 3 are flow charts which show the flow of actuation of the game equipment of this invention.

[0081] The 1st example about pickup actuation of the <1st example of pickup actuation of game character information> game character information is explained using drawing 2.

[0082] A game player prepares the goods to which the desired bar code was given, applies a bar code reader 40 to the bar code concerned directly and reads the bar code concerned to capture a new game character. Then, the read bar code information is sent out to the body 32 of game equipment.

[0083] In the body 32 of game equipment, if bar code information is inputted (step A1), retrieval of table 33e of ROM33 of a cassette 31 will be performed by CPU38 (step A2), and there will be bar code information which is in agreement with table 33e, or (is the entry of the bar code information concerned carried out to table 33e?) it will be judged (step A3).

[0084] When bar code information in agreement exists, CPU38 takes up the game character information corresponding to the bar code information concerned out of stock data 33d (from the Yes root of step A3 to step A4). For example, when the bar code given to can juice is read, the game character information (for example, the game character similar to can juice, the game character which personified can juice) matched with the bar code information concerned in table 33e is taken up. Moreover, when the bar code given to the nutrition supplement drink is read, the game character information (for example, game character which plays the role similar to a nutrition supplement drink) matched with the bar code information concerned in table 33e is taken up.

[0085] In this invention, although it pools the properties (it is strong, is large and are fearful) of a game character besides in the case of taking up a game character out of the stock of the game character itself in this way as a stock in saying, "Game character information is taken up"; also when taking up the one or property beyond it from inside and giving the taken-up property concerned to a game character, it is contained. That is, it is contained in this invention also when determining the property of a game character using the information taken up out of a stock.

[0086] On the other hand, when bar code information in agreement does not exist (it contains also when it is a reading error), CPU38 takes up the game character information which is equivalent to a wild card out of stock data 33d (from No root of step A3 to step A5). Here when [this / "when bar code information in agreement does not exist"] The case where the bar code information and match are not in table 33e from the first, The case where there are no bar code information and match which have been incorrect-recognized by table 33e since the reading error (incorrect recognition) of the bar code of said request took place, Since the reading error (recognition impossible) of the bar code of said request took place, bar code information has not been recognized and the retrieval of table 33e itself may not have been completed. In such a case, since it is specified that it takes up the game character information equivalent to a wild card to table 33e, the game character information which is equivalent to a wild card based on table 33e is taken up.

[0087] Then, the liquid crystal display unit 35 displays on a screen the result of having taken up game character information (step A6). When bar code information in agreement exists, the purport that game character information was taken up, or its game character information that it took up is displayed as a pickup result. On the other hand, when bar code information in agreement does not exist, the game character information equivalent to the purport that the game character information equivalent to said wild card was taken up as a pickup result, or said wild card is displayed.

[0088] In addition, in taking up game character information again, CPU38 takes up game character information out of said stock data 33d based on the bar code information (the bar code information itself or changed bar code information) memorized by RAM34.

[0089] The 2nd example about pickup actuation of the <2nd example of pickup actuation of game character information> game character information is explained using drawing 3. In this 2nd example, although the pickup actuation when not using table 33e is explained, fundamental actuation is the same as that of the 1st above-mentioned example.

[0090] In the body 32 of game equipment, an input of the bar code information read like the case of the 1st above-mentioned example judges whether there is any bar code information [be / it / under / of stock data 33d / correspondence] by CPU38 (step B-2). (step B1) Here, the judgment of whether there is any corresponding bar code information is performed by seeing the homology on an image or a property between the image information or property information which were acquired from a certain bar code information.

[0091] And when corresponding bar code information exists, CPU38 takes up the game character information corresponding to the bar code information concerned out of stock data 33d (from the Yes root of step B-2 to step B3).

[0092] On the other hand, when corresponding bar code information does not exist (it contains also when it is a reading

error), CPU38 assigns the game character information equivalent to said wild card, and takes up the game character information which is equivalent to a wild card out of stock data 33d (from No root of step B-2 to step B4).

[0093] Then, the liquid crystal display unit 35 displays on a screen the result of having taken up game character information (step B5).

[0094] In addition, also in this 2nd example, in taking up game character information again, CPU38 takes up game character information out of said stock data 33d based on the bar code information (the bar code information itself or changed bar code information) memorized by RAM34.

[0095] Although CPU38 had taken up one game character information based on bar code information, it takes up two or more game character information (game character information group) that it corresponded to the bar code information concerned, and you may make it capture it to RAM34 in the 1st and 2nd <3rd example of pickup actuation of game character information> above-mentioned example.

[0096] That is, in the 1st and 2nd above-mentioned example, although bar code information and game character information are matched by one to one, in this 3rd example, two or more game character information is matched with one bar code information.

[0097] If it does in this way, since a game player can choose a favorite thing out of two or more game characters, it can raise the palatability of a game more.

[0098] In this case, the captured game character information may be indicated by list, or you may make it eliminate the game character information which became unnecessary.

[0099] In addition, also in this 3rd example, it is the same as that of the case of the 1st and 2nd above-mentioned example in itself [fundamental / of operation].

[0100] The game equipment of data-exchange actuation > this invention between game equipment besides < can also display the bar code corresponding to the game character information concerned itself on a screen with the game character information taken up by the liquid crystal display unit 35 at coincidence.

[0101] Thus, the game player which is using other game equipments is because this bar code by which a screen display was carried out can be read by the bar code reader as it is, and it can perform the data exchange among other game equipments that we decided to display on a screen also in itself [bar code], without this applying the time and effort of cutoff of a bar code.

[0102] In the game equipment of <use as advertising means of above-mentioned game equipment> this invention, it may be made to differentiate game character information taken up based on a certain factor (a certain factor which can specifically identify that he is a certain specific company) common to the specific bar code information group in which the bar code information of a specific company comes to gather. If it does in this way, the above-mentioned game equipment can be used as an advertising means.

[0103] It explains using the flow chart which shows the actuation in this case to drawing 11 .

[0104] First, operating activities are carried out and the company which receives offer of "service (henceforth service) of using the above-mentioned game equipment as an advertising means" is looked for (step C1).

[0105] If the service application from a company is received (step C2), it will set up so that a character strong against the bar code given to the goods of that company etc. may be assigned, and these contents of a setting will be included in the game equipment of this invention (step C3).

[0106] The game equipment of such this invention is sold and the game equipment is used for many game players. Since the bar code of said company to which the strong character was assigned is inevitably chosen at this time, reputation "the bar code of the goods of A company (that company name) is good" will be formed, and, thereby, that company can enjoy an effect of advertising (step C4).

[0107] And an effect of advertising is fed back to a game equipment manufacture manufacturer and said company (step C5). For example, in order to judge the quality of a setup of a character performed at said step C3 to a game equipment manufacture manufacturer, "the sales of game equipment" and "the operating frequency of the character" for which it asked using the consumer monitor are fed back. Moreover, in order to report the effect of advertising obtained at said step C4 to said company, "the difference of the sales of the goods in comparison with service application before" is fed back.

[0108] After that, the processing from said step C1 is repeated suitably.

[0109] In addition, in this invention, "a record means to record the count of pickup of the taken-up game character" is equivalent to RAM34 (refer to drawing 1). "An output means to output the contents currently recorded on this record means" is equivalent to the liquid crystal display unit 35 (refer to drawing 1). "A calculation means to compute those correlation by contrasting the data and the sales data from a customer company which were recorded on said record means" is equivalent to CPU38 (refer to drawing 1), and "a display means to display the result of this calculation

means" is equivalent to the liquid crystal display unit 35 (refer to drawing 1).

[0110] When the purport that it succeeded in pickup is displayed or there is no game character information equivalent to a wild card in table 33e, you may make it display the purport that pickup went wrong, in the game equipment of <other> this inventions, when displaying a pickup result.

[0111] Moreover, it restricts, when a bar code is read in predetermined time, and you may enable it to capture a game character in the game equipment of this invention. For example, it restricts, when the bar code concerned is read between 3:00 and 4:00 which are the time zone which eats a snack, and you may enable it to capture the corresponding game character speaking of the bar code of snack confectionery.

[0112] In addition, in this specification, although the case where read a "bar code" as "information used as a key", and a game character was captured was explained, this invention may be applied, when reading the gym star code (G code) which is the figure indicated by the lower part section of a bar code and capturing a game character.

[0113] Moreover, this invention may be applied, when recognizing voice (people's voice, music, etc.) as "information used as a key" and capturing a game character.

[0114]

[Example] [1st example] this invention is applicable to portable game equipment as shown in drawing 4 . Here, the game equipment which drawing 4 shows the game equipment concerning the 1st example of this invention, and is shown in this drawing 4 consists of bar code readers 42 of the body 41 of game equipment, and an exposure type. In addition, the cassette 31 shown in drawing 1 and the game cassette which has the same function are made to be inserted in the body 41 of game equipment.

[0115] A bar code reader 42 can read bar code information easily, and is used as a peripheral device in game equipment. This bar code reader 42 is making the function to transmit the bar code information acquired by trying to connect with the communication link terminal (not shown) of the body 41 of game equipment, and reading the bar code of arbitration to the body 41 of game equipment through a communication link terminal have.

[0116] In addition, in this drawing 4 , the manual operation button on which a sign 43 functions as the "input section", the liquid crystal display screen on which a sign 44 functions as the "output section", and a sign 45 show the loudspeaker section which functions as the "output section" too.

[0117] While inserting a game cassette in the body 41 of game equipment in case a game character is captured if concrete employment of this game equipment is explained, a bar code reader 42 is connected to a communication link terminal. And a game is started in such the condition.

[0118] If a desired bar code is read by the bar code reader 42 during activation of a game, by the body 41 of game equipment, the read data will be recognized as bar code information. For example, when the bar code given to the can of oolong tea is read, it is recognized to be data of oolong tea and it analyzes to information, such as a manufacturer and a price.

[0119] And in game equipment, pickup actuation of a game character which was mentioned above is performed using this bar code information. In addition, the example of a game character is shown in drawing 6 - drawing 8 , and the example of the table used for below in the case of pickup is shown.

[0120]

[Table 1]

バーコードから読み取られた商品	対応するゲームキャラクター
りんご	りんご
球	りんご
缶ジュース	ジュース
ナイフ	刃物商人
不明	ちょうちんあんこう

(イメージ)

りんごの外観

球の外観

缶ジュースの外観

ナイフの外観、鋭い

(ワイルドカード)

バーコードから読み取られた商品	対応するゲームキャラクター
氷	悪の大魔王
酢	マッドサイエンティスト
接着剤	粘り強い性格
栄養ドリンク	ライフ回復剤

(特性)

冷たい、固い

薬品、化学

粘り強い、接着させる

栄養がある、パワー回復

[0121] Moreover, this game equipment can carry out bar code computerization of the capacity data of a game character etc., and can also display them on the liquid crystal display screen 44. The displayed bar code information can be read by the bar code reader of other game equipments. On the contrary, the bar code reader 42 of this game equipment can also read the bar code information displayed on the liquid crystal display screen of other bodies of game equipment. Therefore, communication link waging war, exchange of data, etc. can be performed in a completely new form.

[0122] In addition, [0123] which can read bar code information easily even if it can also use a bar code reader as shown in drawing 5 R> 5 (a) and drawing 5 (b) instead of a bar code reader 42 and uses these bar code readers The bar code reader 46 shown in drawing 5 (a) is a pen type [exposure-type] bar code reader, is equipped with bar code read station (scanner) 46c, communication link terminal strapping section (code) 46a, and power supply section (dc-battery) 46b, and is constituted. Here, power supply section 46b is an original power source (AA or dry cell of AAA). Furthermore, although illustration is not carried out, the bar code reader 46 has the electric power switch that ON/OFF of a power source should be made possible.

[0124] Moreover, the bar code reader 47 shown in drawing 5 (b) is a bar code reader of an exposure-type cartridge type, is equipped with bar code read station 47a, and a power supply section / connection 47b, and is constituted.

[0125] These bar code readers 46 and 47 can also read bar code information, and can transmit it to the body 41 of game equipment.

[0126] Moreover, if the manual entry of the numeric data of a bar code is carried out or the numeric data of a bar code is transmitted from other game equipments even if this game equipment does not read a bar code by the bar code reader, it can also recognize the inputted information as bar code information. Therefore, even if it uses the bar code information which carried out in this way and was acquired, a game character can newly be captured.

[0127] The [2nd example] This invention is also applicable to portable game equipment as shown in drawing 9 again.

[0128] Here, drawing 9 shows the game equipment concerning the 2nd example of this invention, and also constitutes this game equipment from a bar code reader (not shown in drawing 9) of the body 21 of game equipment, the game cassette 22, and a dismountable exposure type.

[0129] In addition, in this drawing 9, the manual operation button on which signs 23 and 24 function as the "input section", the liquid crystal display screen on which a sign 25 functions as the "output section", the loudspeaker section on which a sign 26 functions as the "output section" too, and a sign 27 show the connection terminal of a bar code reader.

[0130] Also in such game equipment, a game character can be captured like the thing of the 1st example.

[0131] The [3rd example] This invention is also applicable to game equipment for home use as shown in drawing 10 again.

[0132] Here, drawing 10 shows the game equipment concerning the 3rd example of this invention, and the same portable game equipment 11 as the 1st and 2nd example mentioned above and the game equipment 10 by which this game equipment 11 is inserted constitute this game equipment. In addition, in drawing 10, sign 10a is the insertion slot of game equipment 11, and the manual operation button on which a sign 12 functions as the "input section", and a sign 13 are liquid crystal display screens which function as the "output section."

[0133] Namely, in this game equipment for home use, game equipment 10 functions as a main phone, portable game equipment 11 is functioning as a cordless handset, respectively, and game equipment 10 can perform a game now using the game character captured with portable game equipment 11 by inserting portable game equipment 11 in game equipment 10, and connecting.

[0134] When performing the game using the game character captured newly according to this game equipment for home use, usage that portable game equipment 11 performs at a going-out place, and game equipment 10 performs at home can also be carried out.

[0135]

[Effect of the Invention] Since inputted bar code information and game character information that it corresponds are captured out of the storage section according to the game equipment of this invention (or pickup), a game character can be captured without performing complicated processing of an operation etc. Therefore, the palatability of a game and enjoyableness can be raised, making game equipment simple.

[0136] Moreover, since the exposure-type bar code reader which reads a plane bar code is adopted according to this invention, the bar code given to goods etc. can be read directly. Therefore, the time and effort of cutoff of the required bar code can be saved with conventional game equipment, and also that by which a screen display was carried out to the monitor of other game equipments etc. can also be read as it is.

[0137] Furthermore, since according to this invention two or more game character information (game character information group) that it corresponds can also be taken up when one bar code information is inputted, if it does in this way, an opportunity to choose a desired game character can be given to a game player, and the palatability of a game can be raised more.

[0138] Furthermore, since game character information can also be differentiated according to this invention, if it does in this way, the advertisement advertising function of a specific company can be added to the game equipment of this invention.

[Translation done.]

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